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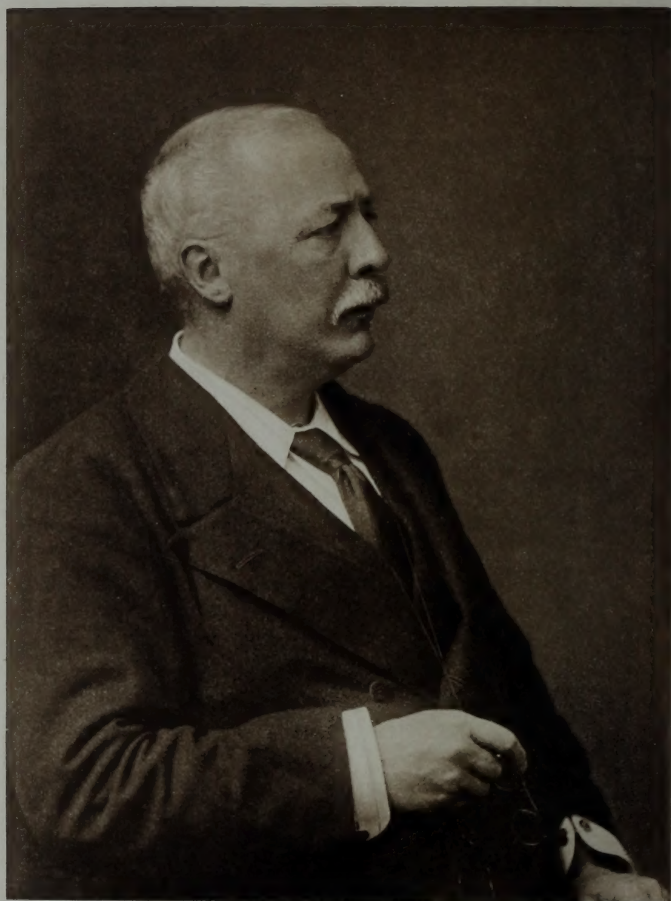
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THE MAKING  
OF MODERN EGYPT







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*Conner*



# THE MAKING OF MODERN EGYPT

BY

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## PREFACE

THE writer cannot let this book appear without expressing his most cordial thanks to friends and officials in Egypt, who have kindly helped him with information. He is alone responsible for the accuracy of all facts and figures, as for opinions or criticisms, which will be found in the following pages. But without assistance as to details regarding Anglo-Egyptian administration his difficulties would have been greatly increased.

Wherever he has made use of matter already published in other works, he has been careful to acknowledge his indebtedness. He has largely utilized the very voluminous Blue Books on Egypt; and Lord Cromer's annual Reports, from 1891 onward, have been invaluable to him.

A. C.

*February, 1906*



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# THE MAKING OF MODERN EGYPT

## INTRODUCTORY

Scheme of the book—Summary of causes which led to the revolt of 1882—The career of Muhammad Ali—Despotic character of his rule—Abbás Pasha—Said Pasha—Reckless expenditure of Ismail Pasha—His indebtedness—Effect of his financial difficulties on his subjects—Political situation at advent of Tewfik Pasha—Military outbreaks of February and September, 1881—Subsequent incidents arising therefrom—Appeal to arms in the circumstances unjustifiable—Sketch of origin and expansion of Khedivate—Successive firmans granted by the Sultan—Present position of the Khedive with regard to his Suzerain.

**I**N the course of the year 1882 an outbreak of anarchy in Egypt led to British occupation. The contest between British and Egyptian forces was summarily decided in September of the same year at Tel-el-Kebir; but that success was a prelude to longer and far more arduous struggles. It was no great matter to carry positions hastily fortified in the desert. The real difficulty was in overcoming the sustained hostility of a great Western Power; in combating the ill-will or the apathy of the ruling classes in Egypt; in loosening the knot of financial complications; in making way against the bitter opposition of at least one foreign colony, and the indifference of all. Last, but not least, was the task of stimulating the energies of successive British Cabinets

which looked less to the resurrection of Egypt than to the amity of other Powers, and to the support of their own political party; whose dislike to armed interference in Egyptian affairs was intense, and whose interest in Egyptian problems was, at times, half-hearted. The story of those years of conflict, up to 1892, has been sketched in the bright pages of "England in Egypt." But although, since its first publication, further chapters were added by Lord Milner in 1894, by the late Sir Clinton Dawkins in 1898, and by Sir Eldon Gorst in 1904, the chronicle of the march of events in Egypt, the annals of its Administration, from the mission of Lord Dufferin in 1882 to the conclusion of the Anglo-French Convention in 1904, are still unwritten. Lord Milner gave us a series of brilliant essays on current Egyptian questions. His pages contain an admirable analysis of contemporary problems, from the standpoint of one who was himself an eminent Anglo-Egyptian official. But lifelike as are his sketches of the public men and the administrative difficulties of the day, and invaluable as are his pages to the student of contemporary Egypt, his book does not furnish, and does not pretend to furnish, a consecutive narrative of successive incidents, or to follow closely the order of events. Whoever writes the history of modern Egypt must consult it; but, in itself, it is not that history. When Lord Milner wrote, moreover, we had not seen the last of the three acts of the great Egyptian drama, which reached its catastrophe and climax in the final destruction of the Khalifa Abdullah and his followers in 1899, and in the ultimate conciliation of the two Western Powers, as embodied in their Convention of 1904.

The object of these pages is to tell, in popular terms, the story of the making of modern Egypt under British influence; from its ill-omened commencement, and through-



out its early years of difficulty, doubtings, and disasters, to the triumphant close of the prolonged crisis. It will be shown by what "slow, faint steps and much exceeding pain" Lord Cromer, his associates and subordinates, have achieved success over the long series of obstacles presented to them. The central figure throughout that period has been the British Minister and Agent. Cabinets in London, in Paris, and in Cairo have come and gone; diplomatists have fretted their hour on the stage, and have faded into obscurity. Able and devoted subordinates have in turn assisted the British Agent; and, their term accomplished, have passed on to other labours. Lord Cromer alone has remained throughout: in him, during more than twenty years, the life of Egypt has centred, and from him all energy has radiated. In the following pages it will be seen how, but for his patience and sagacity, united with perseverance which admits of no discomfiture, the success of British intervention must have been imperilled. The making of modern Egypt is the work of Lord Cromer; without him it might scarcely have been accomplished, and with his name it will remain identified.

Before taking up that story we must glance very summarily at the course of events previous to British occupation. It will not be necessary to dwell at much length on the political incidents which led to the deposition of the late Ismail Pasha; they are antecedent to the period to be dealt with, and may be viewed as matter of general knowledge. But something must be said of the character and causes of the revolt in 1882. These are found far back in the century; and, if the issue was witnessed in 1882, the sources of the military revolt and popular disorder may be traced in the policy and practice of the

reigning dynasty in Egypt, from the days of its founder, Muhammad Ali, to the expulsion of Ismail Pasha.

At the commencement of the nineteenth century Egypt had been for long years a province under the Sultan of Turkey, governed nominally under the authority of the Porte by a Pasha designated from Constantinople, but ruled, in effect, by resident Mameluke Beys. In 1806 an Albanian soldier, with little but his own genius and courage to support him, after a trial of strength with the Turkish deputy of the Sultan, was himself nominated by the Porte to be Wali or Governor of Egypt. Little by little the power of Muhammad Ali, the Albanian, consolidated itself, and his ambitions grew.

The first to come under his claw were our own countrymen, who, while operating against Muhammad Ali in the interests of the Mamelukes, were defeated near Rosetta in 1807. Few who nowadays drive by the Ezbekieh Garden are aware that the space which it covers was hideous, less than a century ago, with the heads of British soldiers, whose captured comrades survived only to be sold as slaves, or to be cast as prisoners of war into the Citadel. In 1811 the Mamelukes were treacherously disposed of by a general massacre. Between 1811 and 1818 Ibrahim Pasha, the adopted son of Muhammad Ali, penetrated Arabia and destroyed the Wahábi power. In 1820 the Soudan was invaded and in 1822 Kordofan was annexed; in 1823 Khartum was founded. In 1824 the Egyptian Pasha joined military and naval forces with the Sultan, for in those days Egypt possessed no inconsiderable fleet. After largely contributing to the conquest of the Morea, Muhammad Ali saw his fleet destroyed in 1827, with that of his Suzerain, at the naval battle of Navarino. Finally, turning on his master, the Sultan, in 1831, he marched his army almost to the walls



of Constantinople and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Turks at Konia. But for the approach of Russian troops the Turkish flag might have floated at Stamboul, over an Albanian dynasty. In 1833 the Pasha of Egypt was made also Pasha of Syria. But his ambition was not yet satisfied, and in 1839 we find Ibrahim Pasha again defeating the Turkish army at Nezib. The Turkish fleet deserted the Sultan and sailed to Alexandria; once more the road to Constantinople lay open to Muhammad Ali. It was the zenith of his fortunes. Great Britain intervened and smote the Egyptian. The Turks defeated him at Kalaat Maidan. Acre fell to British, Austrian, and Turkish squadrons; Syria was evacuated, and was torn from the grasp of Egypt. Finally, in 1841, the curtain falls on the drama of Muhammad Ali's Turkish wars, leaving him stripped, indeed, of his Syrian Pashalik, but holding in his hand the Sultan's firman, conferring on him and on his family the right for ever, subject to annual tribute, of succession to the Egyptian throne.

The seed that had been sown in Egypt during the long campaigns of Muhammad Ali and of Ibrahim Pasha was to bear bitter fruit. If Muhammad Ali sowed the wind, Tewfik Pasha reaped the whirlwind. In the pages of contemporary writers, such as the French veterinary surgeon Hamont, we have overwhelming evidence of the tyranny and oppression which characterized the rule of the founder of the Khedivial dynasty. It was relentless, remorseless, irresistible. The youth of Egypt, and not a little of its mature manhood, was yearly dragged off to the army. The plains of Arabia, Syria, and the Soudan were white with the bones of the Egyptian fellah. Those who remained were insufficient, in numbers or in aptitude, to till the soil. But whether or no there was inefficiency of hands, the land revenue was mercilessly

collected. The peasant had no right or title in the land he cultivated, and might at any time be ousted. Much of the soil of Egypt was made over to the Turkish satellites of the Pasha. The whole trade in Egyptian produce was treated by Muhammad Ali as a personal monopoly. Harvests were bought by the Governor at his own rates from the Fellaheen, and resold by him for export at great profit. Scarcity, rising not infrequently to famine, desolated the country. Bubonic and bovine plague were endemic. The peasants' cattle were liable to be seized for the private farms and factories of the Pasha and his Turks; what their agents spared, plague might carry away. Lads were dragged to schools with high-sounding names—polytechnic schools, schools of medicine, schools of agriculture, veterinary schools; all of them, whatever their titles, inefficient and little more than shams. The youths who entered them were lost henceforth to their families, and were regarded as chattels of the Government. Their course of so-called instruction completed (or incompleting, as the case might be), they were despatched, in many cases, to perish under foreign skies; or survived to find themselves employed in posts wholly alien to their education and training.

This rapid sketch of the character of Muhammad Ali's rule may help us to understand events long subsequent. We may note, in the first place, that in 1841 Egypt entered, for the first time since the Turkish conquest, on a separate and distinct corporate existence. There was no representative of the Sultan in Cairo other than Muhammad Ali himself, who held the government by the Sultan's firman, and enjoyed in his family the right to succession. Egypt, having thus floated off, as it were, from the side of Turkey, was thrown for the future on her own resources, and on her own power of weathering storms. Henceforward the

Government of Egypt, the government of the few over the many, of the foreign Turk over the native Egyptian, was to stand or fall by its own strength. The Pasha of Egypt and his dwindling band of countrymen were on the one side ; on the other were the Egyptians ; a subject people, no doubt, but increasing in numbers, in intelligence, and in ambition. Nothing can exceed the apprehension felt by the Cairo Turk towards his brother in Constantinople. In the widest sense of the term, a Turk will bear no brother near the throne. Hence, since 1841 there has been an ever-decreasing flow of fresh blood into the veins of the ruling class in Egypt. With lapse of time, its numbers and intelligence have more and more diminished. The army, even in Muhammad Ali's time, had ceased to be exclusively composed of Albanians, Turks, Circassians, or black troops from the Soudan. Although, after the battle of Konia, the experiment of conferring the rank of officer on Egyptians was entertained, only to be dismissed, the native of Egypt was from that time freely admitted to the grade of non-commissioned officer. The germs of military ambition were sown even at this early stage. We must bear finally in mind the ceaseless misery of the mass of the people ; and it is not difficult to foresee that, from the hour when Egypt entered, under Muhammad Ali, on a separate and independent existence, elements of decay and dissolution commenced to work, which, in the course of time, were sure, unless combated, to destroy the whole system.

Abbas Pasha, who succeeded Muhammad Ali, reigned but five years. In his time, and in that of his successor Said Pasha, the hand of the Government pressed less heavily upon the people, because, the policy of those rulers being pacific, supplies were less needed. Said Pasha, though he passed a liberal land law, conferring valuable



rights on the cultivating occupants of the land, contributed largely to their misery by the Suez Canal Concession, entailing on them forced labour, in its most extensive and unremunerative form. Simultaneously he threw open the grade of regimental officer to Egyptians. Then, in 1863, came Ismail Pasha, the character of whose internal rule reflected that of Muhammad Ali, his grandfather. He attempted no foreign conquest, except in the Soudan, where, through Sir Samuel Baker and General Gordon, who were successively nominated Governors, he extended and consolidated Turkish rule; and in Abyssinia, where he met with a crushing disaster. He suffered, like Muhammad Ali, from megalomania; and, like him, he aimed at making himself proprietor of the greater part of the land of Egypt. The soil of Egypt, he considered, was his, to acquire and to keep in his own hands, or to dispose of as he would. The native of Egypt was there, in order that he might cultivate the land for his ruler. To Ismail, as to Muhammad Ali, the fellah was a *bête de somme*. The idea that the interests of his people could be a trust committed to him no more entered Ismail Pasha's head than it has entered the heart of Sultan Abdul Hamíd. So he built factories and made railways, incidentally for his subjects, but primarily for his own purposes, established costly and inefficient schools, erected palaces, carried on wars, and incurred huge debts. The total debt of Egypt at the accession of Ismail Pasha, in 1863, was less than four million sterling; when, in 1879, he left the country, it amounted to over one hundred million pounds sterling. The net product of his loans was, of course, far less than the liability incurred; barely amounting indeed to half. With accumulating debt came increasing pressure on the Khedive, and twofold pressure on the Khedive's subjects. But however much he might harass his people, his position com-

pelled him to rely upon them. The Turks in Egypt were comparatively few in number; and Egyptians were employed with growing frequency in the higher grades both of the civil and military administration. Several regiments were commanded by Egyptian colonels; the non-commissioned officers and the rank and file were, with rare exceptions, wholly Egyptian. The losses in the Abyssinian campaign called for a further creation of Egyptian officers to replace those who had succumbed. With increasing misery among the Egyptian people we find a growing proportion of Egyptian officers, and a reduced ratio of the Turkish element in the army.

When, therefore, at the instance and under pressure of the British and French Governments, Ismail Pasha, being insolvent and intractable, was deposed by the Sultan, and expelled from Egypt in June, 1879, the situation was full of menace to Turkish rule. The country was in the utmost misery; the indebtedness of the fellah was universal; there was no justice; no order, or system, in the collection of the land revenue and taxes. The finances were bankrupt, and the European creditor was in possession. The governing body, few in number, were, with rare exceptions, devoid of character, probity, and intelligence. The Government could not, and would not if it could, turn for help to Constantinople; for the Sultan was known to desire nothing more than a pretext for resuming the firmans which he had granted to the rulers of Egypt. The army, composed mainly of Egyptians, were the brothers and sons of the unhappy taxpayers. The sympathies of all ranks of the army were necessarily with their countrymen. The pride of the Egyptian officer was daily hurt by the haughty bearing of his Turkish or Circassian colleagues, and by their contemptuous treatment. Though Ismail Pasha had been

removed, his son and successor was there, a Turk of the household of Muhammad Ali. He was young and said to be amiable; but he had been reared in the traditions of his forefathers. The country was alarmed and irritated at the spectacle of Europeans disposing of their finances; the more so that while the numbers and emoluments of the foreigner were grossly exaggerated by public report, little benefit had as yet accrued from his labours. The Sultan was watchful and active, and was preparing to profit by any chance given to him of recovering his hold upon Egypt. The authority of the Khedivate had been shaken to the base by the deposition of Ismail Pasha, and by the interference of the Western Powers. The new Khedive had no personal weight or influence in the country. The moment seemed, in a word, to have come when every element of disaffection was combined against the Turk; when almost every weapon of resistance had dropped from him.

This was the position, when on the 1st of February, 1881, three Egyptian colonels, Arábi, Ali Fahmi, and Abdulál, were summoned to appear, for acts of insubordination, before a court martial. They were rescued by their soldiers during the proceedings, and the curtain fell on the first scene of the revolt. Finding that the Government was not strong enough to coerce them, the three colonels, with their officers, organized on September 9th a military demonstration under the windows of the Abdin Palace, in the heart of Cairo, and wrung from the Khedive the dismissal of his Ministry. In September, as in February, the programme of the officers aimed almost exclusively at their own interests. At a time of severe financial pressure, when economy and reduction were needed in every direction, they clamoured for the maintenance of the army at the full number of eighteen thousand men, authorized by the firman



granted to Khedive Tewfik. They not only pressed for exemption from economies elsewhere enforced, but claimed an increased scale of pay for all ranks. They further demanded that the post of War Minister should be conferred on Mahmud Sámi, a member of the late Ministry, who had been privy to the outbreak of February. Mahmud Sámi was a Circassian, descended from a Mameluke Bey; his sinister presence among Egyptian mutinous officers augured no good for the interests of Egypt. It was desired also, for reasons not difficult to gauge, to convoke the National Chamber. In February, 1882, Mahmud Sámi succeeded as Prime Minister to Sherif Pasha, who had reluctantly undertaken the Government after the demonstration of September. Sherif Pasha had found himself unable to accept, and impotent to resist, the pressure of the officers, exerted through the Chamber of Notables, now duly assembled. Arábi was made Minister of War. Early in April, forty Turkish and Circassian officers were court-martialled on various charges by a Court of Egyptian officers, and were sentenced to exile in the most distant parts of the Soudan. The refusal of the Khedive to sanction the sentence, which, in popular opinion, was equivalent to a sentence of death, led, in May, to the illegal resummoning of the Chamber of Notables by the Cabinet, on no authority other than its own, with the object of declaring the deposition of the Khedive. But the Notables, now alarmed at the evident intentions of the two Western Powers, who had watched with growing anxiety the events of the last eight months, and whose fleets were assembling, refused to obey the Cabinet; and the military group, while retaining all real hold of power, nominally resigned office.

With events that subsequently occurred we are not at present concerned; the object of these pages being,

not to give the narrative of the military revolt, but to explain the causes which led to it. Let it be added, however, that, as the movement developed, it grew more complicated. It was no longer a struggle between Egyptian and Turkish officers, or between the Khedive and his subjects. Other larger interests found themselves involved. The hand of the Sultan became more distinctly visible. Mahmud Sámi, presumably, was his agent, and was engaged under his auspices in piloting the vessel of the State through Egyptian shoals into a Turkish port. The aggressive tone taken by the Powers in the Joint Note of 1882, which was addressed by the Governments of Great Britain and France to the Egyptian Government in January of that year, followed by long delay in subsequent action, had drawn many Egyptians into the ranks of the disaffected. Opportunity was taken of the incident of the Joint Note and of the six months' interval that followed to induce the mass of the population to believe that the jealousies of the two Western Powers would prevent their co-operation, and that the debts of the fellaheen would be wiped out by the Egyptian party now in power. Religious animosity was excited, and resulted in disturbances which led to the outbreak of hostilities, and to the ultimate collapse of the rebellion.

How far was the Egyptian appeal to arms justified? In examining this matter we are met by some plain considerations. With the insignificant force at their command were the leaders of the movement at liberty to risk the lives and fortunes of their countrymen in the conflict to which they hurried them? They may have counted on disunion in European Councils, and their European advisers—for they had many—may have assured them that the jealousies of Great Britain and France would restrain the Cabinets of the Western Powers from resort



to arms. The event showed that they were ill-advised ; and at best such an off-chance was but a slender reed to lean on. The European interests engaged in Egypt were far too various and important to permit of the engagements contracted by the Khedive being placed at the mercy of Egyptian soldiery, or of an inexperienced native administration. Then, again, what was the alleged pretext for rebellion? The tyranny of Khedivial rule? But Ismail had gone ; against his son no charge could rest ; and in all its long history no such guarantee against exaction and fiscal misgovernment had ever been offered to Egypt as the presence at its council table of European Comptrollers. The roots of finance lie deep in administration ; and wrongdoing in other departments could not long continue without being brought under the Comptroller's notice. The deposition of the Khedive was unquestionably the object of the revolt. But the deposition of the Khedive could not have been carried out, except in defiance of the Sultan's firmans. Granted that nothing would have given the Sultan greater pleasure than to revoke the firmans which created the Khedivate, what assurance could there be that by such a course Turkish rule in Egypt would be put an end to? Would it not, on the contrary, have been consolidated? Would not the Sultan have re-entered, as of right, into full possession and control of Egypt as a province of his Empire? It may be argued that though the military leaders might fail, they would fail in the cause of liberty, and that in so great a cause men are justified in making, and in expecting their countrymen to make, all sacrifices. On two conditions they are justified ; the first, that there is a reasonable possibility that the sacrifice asked for will not be in vain ; and secondly, that those who make the call are inspired by true patriotism. Was this the case with the Egyptian

military leaders? Where was the reasonable, or even the wildest possibility of success? What were the motives and claims put in the foreground in their first and only authentic manifesto? Were they a plea for liberty? Did they embody a recital of the rights and wrongs of the people? Not at all; the grievance alleged was the preference given by the Khedive to the Turkish and Circassian officers. Claims were urged for exemption from measures of economy elsewhere contemplated; for more pay, and for higher position. Apprehension for their personal safety was their alleged motive; not fears for their country, nor anxiety for their countrymen. Their patriotism consisted, as patriotism often does, in seeking to oust another that the vacant seat may be secured. The name of Liberty is, in truth, an awful word to conjure by. She may, or may not, reveal herself to the pure of heart; but again and again has she proved that they who, for selfish ends, invoke her will be utterly consumed at her altars.

It would presumably be beside the point to ask whether in 1882 there existed in Egypt any potentiality of self-government. For in spite of all evidence to the contrary, men will still maintain that the mere gift of popular institutions brings with it the capacity for freedom. In the political as in the material world, an organism must be suited to its environment, or it will cease to develop, and will perish. Here is Lord Milner's estimate of the Egyptian, as he saw him; and as Lord Milner came to Cairo long after the events of 1882, he cannot be accused of partizanship. He writes of the Egyptians as "a nation of submissive slaves, devoid of the slightest spark of the spirit of liberty." Such as they were when these words were written, such in all probability they will for a long time continue to be. Then, as now, politically blind,

they followed blind leaders into the trenches of Tel-el-Kebir, where all fell together. Egypt may one day shake off her immemorial past, and show herself capable of self-restraint, self-respect, and self-government. But no one, in 1882, whose eyes were not obscured, could for a moment believe that Mahmud Sámi and his troop were Washingtons or Hampdens, or that the hour of Egyptian emancipation had struck. To "conform the shows of things to the desires of the mind" is to live with the poet in a world of dreams. But the desires of the mind will not alter the substance of things; and such dreams have a rude awakening.

Speculations such as these apart, the sum and substance of the whole matter, the humour of it, in Corporal Nym's phrase, would seem to be that, if you propose to yourself to govern (still more, to misgovern) an alien people, you must assure yourself that the dominant factor in your army is not supplied from among the aliens.

A few further words may be added before the thread of narrative is taken up, to convey some idea of the status of the Khedive, of his attributes, of the obligations incumbent on him, and of his relations to the Sultan of Turkey, the Suzerain. Egypt, it has been seen, was first formed into a Province, to be governed by a hereditary dynasty, by the firman of the Sultan conferred on Muhammad Ali Pasha in 1841. By this firman the Porte recognized the permanent alienation of the government of Egypt to a particular family; but in other respects the powers conferred on Muhammad Ali were very jealously limited. Muhammad Ali had no legislative authority. He ranked at Constantinople after the Grand Vizier. Taxes were to be collected in the Sultan's name; money coined in Egypt bore the Imperial name and designation. The strength of the army was limited; but, in case of war,



might be increased as the Government of the Sultan thought necessary. Other conditions were added, with the view of limiting the Pasha's authority. Later, Said Pasha obtained a firman fixing a maximum limit of 80,000 men to the army, and granting a few other unimportant privileges. But in 1866 and 1867 new firmans were issued to Ismail Pasha, after his accession. The former of these introduced a new rule of succession, by recognizing the right of primogeniture, in supersession of the practice which had hitherto obtained of the succession passing to the eldest agnate member of the family. Under the old order of succession, the heir of Ismail would have been, not his son Tewfik Pasha, but Halim Pasha, the youngest son of Muhammad Ali, and therefore uncle to Ismail Pasha, though a year younger than his nephew. In return for this concession the tribute was raised from £376,000 to £675,000. By the firman of 1867 the title of Khedive was granted to Ismail Pasha, and to his successors in direct male line of descent. He was empowered to make special regulations for the internal administration of the country. He was also enabled to conclude arrangements with foreign Powers in regard to the subjects of such Powers resident in Egypt. By a firman of 1869 the Khedive had been prohibited from issuing foreign loans without the sanction and consent of the Porte. By a later firman, in 1872, this restriction was removed; and by a subsequent firman in the same year the powers and privileges hitherto conferred on the Khedive were consolidated and greatly extended. The civil and financial administration of the country was confided to him, with the power of making internal laws and regulations. He might contract, in the name of Egypt, any loan he thought necessary. All restriction was removed from the number of his army. He might build any vessels of war excepting ironclads.

He might make Conventions with foreign Powers as to customs duties or commerce, so long as they did not infringe on the political treaties of the Porte. The duty of referring to the Porte on important questions was no longer enforced.

On the accession of Tewfik Pasha, the firman recognizing his succession modified previous firmans. The power of contracting loans without previous consent of the Sultan was withdrawn, and the maximum strength of the army was limited to 18,000 men. It may be added that the Grand Kadi, or Chief Doctor and Judge of the religious law, is, and has always been, throughout these changes, appointed to his office in Egypt not by the Khedive, but by the Sultan.

The Khedive of Egypt is thus a very powerful vassal of the Sultan, enjoying many of the attributes of sovereignty. Yet each successive Khedive holds his office at the Sultan's pleasure, as was shown by the deposition of Ismail Pasha merely in virtue of the Sultan's firman; and on the accession of each new Khedive, his position is not legalized until he has duly received the Sultan's firman of investiture. In all that concerned the internal administration of Egypt, Tewfik Pasha had a free hand. In Egypt his writ, and only his writ, ran; the authority of the Sultan had been delegated to him, save only as to the putting forth of loans, the strength of his army, the construction of ironclads, the duty of coming to his Suzerain's aid in case of war, the appointment of the Grand Kadi, or Chief Muhammedan Judge, with certain matters pertaining to the flag, to coinage, to nominations to certain higher military and civil grades, and to the bestowal of decorations. All decorations bestowed by the Khedive are Turkish decorations, though the Khedive has the power of conferring them. A certain number of firmans to this end are en-

trusted, on payment of fees, to the Khedive, who distributes the decorations as he will.

It will be seen that, independent in many ways as is the authority of the Egyptian ruler, it derives directly from the Sultan ; and is renewed and confirmed, though it may be with modifications, at the accession of each fresh Khedive. The influence of Constantinople in the Palace at Cairo is very powerful, and great are the apprehensions entertained there as to the use which may be made of it. As Caliph, again, the Sultan exercises great spiritual power over the minds and consciences of most true believers ; so that in things temporal, as in things eternal, his is the master-situation.

A Khedive like Ismail Pasha alternately cajoled, bribed, or bearded the Sultan ; Tewfik Pasha feared him, and sought to propitiate him ; the present Khedive would seem to walk warily, as his position and the experience he has gained requires ; but while maintaining a friendly attitude towards the British representative, to court more close and confidential relations with his Suzerain than perhaps might have seemed expedient to the sagacity or to the jealousy of his predecessors.



## CHAPTER I

### THE MISSION OF LORD DUFFERIN

Brief recapitulation of events in Egypt from 1876 to 1883—Institution of the Dual Control in 1876—Of the Caisse de la Dette Publique—Of the Commission of Enquiry into the financial system of Ismail Pasha—Appointment and dismissal of European Ministry—Insolvency of Ismail Pasha—His fall—Succession of his son, Tewfik Pasha—Law of Liquidation of 1880—Disturbances caused by military revolt ending in battle of Tel-el-Kebir—Surrender of Arábi Pasha—Suspension of Dual Control—Commencement of this narrative from arrival of Lord Dufferin in Egypt—Trial and exile of rebel officers—Effect of sentences on Khedive's authority—Lord Dufferin's Report—His difficulties—His instructions—His recommendations—Situation in the Soudan at the time of Lord Dufferin's Report—Views of the Cabinet in London as to treatment of the Soudan question.

IN the course of the ensuing narrative, as in the summary of earlier events which has been traced in foregoing pages, incidents must necessarily be made subject of reference which took place before British occupation. In point of time they do not actually fall within the limits of this book; but, so brief is the remembrance of public events, and so dark is the shadow which ever hangs over the immediate past, that it is desirable to hazard in briefest terms some sketch of the circumstances by which the occupation of Egypt by British troops was brought about, and of the events which immediately followed on it. It can be but the merest outline. But it may be sufficient to recall to memory successive incidents, of which so much as was most material to later developments will be referred to at greater length, as occasion necessi-

tates, hereafter ; while the rest, when once restated, may be left without further comment.

The period of Ismail Pasha's rule had ended, as has been seen, in the utmost financial disaster. From 1872, when the restrictions hitherto imposed by Imperial firmans on the Khedive's borrowing powers were removed, the pace at which the Khedive rushed down the road to ruin became greatly accelerated. Loan after loan was raised—each, as the credit of Egypt declined, on more usurious terms than the last—until in 1876, in accord with Messrs. Goschen and Joubert, who were the British and French representatives of his European bond-holders, a settlement of the Khedive's difficulties was attempted. An international Public Debt office, known as the Caisse de la Dette Publique, was created in Cairo, and a British and a French Comptroller of Finances were appointed. A Commission of Inquiry into the fiscal administration of Egypt, to be conducted by British and French officials, was nominated in March, 1878 ; which, combined with the increasing pressure of the financial situation, led shortly to the suppression of the Control as then constituted, and in August, 1878, to the experiment of an international Ministry, composed of an Egyptian (Nubar Pasha), an Englishman, and a Frenchman. This Ministry was charged with settlement of the floating debt and the restoration of equilibrium. It disappeared, after an outbreak of military disorder, in February, 1879, and a native Ministry was reappointed by Ismail Pasha, who produced a scheme of settlement of his own. On June 25th, 1879, Ismail Pasha was deposed by firman of the Sultan, and Tewfik Pasha was nominated in his place. The Dual Control was revived, with new Comptrollers and larger attributes ; and Riyáz Pasha formed a fresh and purely native Ministry. In April, 1880, an International

Commission of Liquidation sat in Cairo, and presented a scheme of liquidation of all the Khedive's liabilities, which, with the approval of the Powers, was promulgated on the 17th of July, 1880. Administration had resumed its course, when on the 1st of February, 1881, military disturbances occurred. On September 9th a demonstration of the army took place under the leadership of Arábi Bey (later Arábi Pasha) in the square of Abdin Palace, which led to the fall of the existing Ministry. From that day the Khedive's authority and the influence of the Comptrollers fell rapidly into abeyance.] In January, 1882, the Governments of Great Britain and France presented a Joint Note to the Khedive, denouncing the military party. Between June 2nd and 5th, 1882, British and French ironclads appeared at Alexandria, and on the 11th of June Alexandria responded by breaking out into riot and bloodshed, in which many European lives were sacrificed. On July 11th the forts of Alexandria were bombarded by the British fleet; the French fleet, under instructions from its Government, having steamed out of the port of Alexandria prior to hostile operations. Arábi Pasha and his troops withdrew into fortified positions in the interior, leaving Alexandria in flames. On August 19th Lord Wolseley arrived at Alexandria from England in command of a force which, on September 13th, defeated Arábi's rabble of armed men at Tel-el-Kebir; on September 14th Arábi and his fellow-rebels surrendered, and the insurrection was at an end. The rebel officers were sent for trial on various charges before an Egyptian tribunal; and the British Government, while directing the British Comptroller to return to Egypt in October, intimated to the French Cabinet that it proposed to withdraw from the Dual Control. This was the position when the Earl of Dufferin, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, was instructed early in

November, 1882, to proceed to Egypt, and to advise the British Cabinet as to the measures to be adopted there for the future.

On the 7th of November, 1882, little less than two months after the Egyptian army had vanished in a puff of smoke, Lord Dufferin set foot in Alexandria. His mission was not only to advise the British Government as to the state of affairs in Egypt, but to propose the measures to be taken to reconstruct the Administration. Two events of importance awaited immediate disposal. The Dual Control had been denounced by Great Britain, and a substitute had to be provided; the leaders of the rebellion had been put upon their trial, the proceedings of which threatened to become a scandal. The Dual Control, it has been shown, dated from 1876, when, in his grapple with Messrs. Goschen and Joubert, who were the representatives severally of the British and French holders of Egyptian bonds, Ismail Pasha had nominated Messrs. Romaine and Malaret to be Comptrollers, the one of State receipts, the other of the public accounts. Their control proved to be nominal, and their appointment a snare and delusion, for they were allowed no real insight into affairs. They were expected to sign their names to figures prepared for them, and to abstain from inconvenient inquiries. The Khedivial aim in appointing them was to throw dust into the eyes of uneasy creditors; but the day for such manœuvres was over. The researches of the Commission of Inquiry into the finances of Egypt during the summer of 1878, conducted by Mr. (later Sir Charles) Rivers Wilson, Captain Baring (now Lord Cromer), and M. de Blignières, had laid bare the anatomy of Ismail Pasha's fiscal administration. About August, 1878, the situation became more critical; a mixed Ministry was formed, in which Nubar Pasha was President, and British and French members—



Mr. Rivers Wilson and M. de Blignières—took respectively the portfolios of Finance and Public Works. The Ministry succumbed after a few months to a military *émeute*, organized, it is believed, by the Khedive, whose pupils, at a later date, would be found to have bettered their instruction. In November, 1879, after the expulsion of Ismail Pasha, the Control was revived, Major Baring and M. de Blignières being nominated Comptrollers. This time the Control was serious. Ismail Pasha had been deposed in June, and was succeeded by his son Tewfik, and the grip of the Control on Egyptian finances was now no sham, but grim reality. Both Comptrollers had in 1876 been nominated Commissioners of the National Debt Office—the Caisse de la Dette Publique—but both had subsequently retired; Major Baring in the summer of 1879, M. de Blignières on becoming a member of Nubar Pasha's Ministry in 1878. Profiting by the knowledge which they had acquired in the Enquiry of 1878, the Comptrollers set on foot a variety of reforms, procured the abolition of certain vexatious taxes, and prepared the ground for the International Commission of Liquidation, which sat in the summer of 1880 to arrange the settlement of the debt which Ismail Pasha had bequeathed to his country, and to provide for the future of the Egyptian finances. The Khedivial decree adopting the report of the Commission was submitted to and approved by the Governments of Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, and Italy, and its proposals became law on the 17th of July, 1880. Shortly after that date, Major Baring resigned his post of Comptroller, to take up the office of Financial Member of the Viceroy's Council in India, and was succeeded by Mr. (later Sir Auckland) Colvin, who had previously succeeded him at the Caisse de la Dette. In the middle of 1882 M. de Blignières was recalled to France, his place



being taken by M. Brédif. After the restoration of order, M. Brédif returned for a short time to Cairo, but did not resume his functions. The British Cabinet had intimated to France its intention to withdraw from the Joint Control. The French Government having declined to co-operate in the naval and military operations against Arábi, after the war British influence became dominant. Thus it fell to Lord Dufferin to arrange the measures necessary to wind up the Control, and to set in motion, under instructions from London, the machinery required to replace it.

But the more pressing problem that awaited Lord Dufferin was the disposal of Arábi and his fellows. They had been placed on their trial on various heads of indictment before an Egyptian Court, where they were defended by two English barristers, the prosecutor on behalf of the Egyptian Government being a French lawyer. The trial, which had commenced before Lord Dufferin arrived in Egypt, was proving itself unsatisfactory to all concerned. The Government of the Khedive regarded it as superfluous; for had not the accused after a series of outrageous insults to the Khedive and his Ministers, been taken in arms against them? To the counsel for the defence, the constitution of the Court, the procedure adopted, and the nature of the evidence offered, were equally objectionable. The Court was browbeaten by the lawyers, and humiliated by the exhibition of its own incompetency. The accused believed, or affected to believe, themselves foredoomed. The public, sympathising with the Khedive, was willing to approve the punishment of the prisoners as rebels who had taken up arms against their rulers, but declined to give credence either to the evidence offered on any other head of indictment, or to the impartiality of the Court. Lord Dufferin put an end summarily to the farce. Under

arrangements sanctioned by him, the prisoners pleaded guilty to rebellion, and were exiled to Ceylon ; and there, so far as they were concerned, the matter ended. Exile was the wisest punishment, probably, that could be arrived at in the circumstances ; but it was attended with one drawback of grave and far-reaching importance. It was not to be gainsaid, on the one hand, that, if the Khedive held the rebels in his power, it was due to no merits of his Government, but to the exertions of British troops. Whatever had been the crime of Arábi and his associates, it was not for one of the house of Muhammad Ali and of Ismail to strike at an Egyptian in the name of justice. The prisoners, in common with all Egypt, had suffered under the tyranny of Khedive Tewfik's father, as the generation before them had suffered under Muhammad Ali. But for British intervention, the prisoners and their friends would have thrown the whole house of Muhammad Ali, bag and baggage, into the Red Sea. The Khedive could not be allowed, under benefit of the intervention of a civilized Power, to make himself arbiter of their fate. It was for the Power that had subdued them to punish them. All this was unanswerable, and public opinion in Great Britain, flushed even by success over an Egyptian army, was disposed to show itself generous. Vanity was flattered by an occasion for the display of magnanimity ; for magnanimity, like charity, may be indulged in without cost, if exercised at the expense of a third party. There came the rub. The third party was the Khedive. The cost of British clemency had to be met by Tewfik Pasha, and the eclipse of the Khedive's authority was the measure of that cost. The British had landed in Egypt not to destroy the authority of the Khedive, but to restore it, and to retire. But, had they wished to destroy it and to make prolonged occupation of Egypt necessary, they could have adopted

no more effective means than by remitting the death sentence on rebellious officers in arms. In the autocratic East, the degree of submission to the ruler depends on the public estimate of his power, and this again depends on the free and unfettered use which he is seen to make of it. If the Khedive might not punish condignly the very head and front of offenders, his authority fell to the ground; nor could all the Queen's horses nor all the Queen's men raise it up again. The authority of the Khedive might still be maintained, as to the day of Tewfik's death, and as under his successor, it has been maintained, by foreign bayonets. But foreign bayonets must be kept in Egypt to support it. However sincere, therefore, the British Cabinet may have been in the expression of its wish to withdraw its troops from Egypt at the earliest opportunity, it is not to be wondered at if the foreign colonies in Egypt, and the Governments to which they were subject—still less if the Khedive himself—regarded the clemency shown to the rebels as based upon the methods of Machiavelli. It was generally believed in Egypt that though it might be the declared wish of the British to retire when the Khedive's power was restored, they had adopted, curiously enough, the one course calculated to prevent the restoration of his power.

Lord Dufferin had landed in Alexandria from Constantinople on November 7th, 1882. Less than three months later—on February 6th, 1883—he submitted to Lord Granville his proposals for the reorganization of Egypt. Conversant as he was with the characteristics of the East, and laboriously as he had laid himself out since his arrival to ascertain the views of all who could give him information, Lord Dufferin felt that he had not had time fully to master the whole extent of the problem submitted to him. "I have had far less leisure than I should have



wished to study the onerous question upon which your lordship has desired my opinion," he wrote. But the urgency of the occasion called for prompt action. It was desirable that the Ministry should declare its policy, and so put an end to discussion and contention at home regarding the future relations of Egypt and of Great Britain. Public opinion in England was sharply divided. Mr. Gladstone's Ministry had gone to Egypt very reluctantly, and were eager to hear what Lord Dufferin had to say as to the chances of their being able to leave it. On the other hand, many in England were strongly opposed, if not to evacuation, at least to evacuation within a fixed period. All the European Powers, especially France, were jealously awaiting the decision of the British Cabinet. In Egypt itself the public service was paralyzed, and urgently required relief. Lord Dufferin, as our ambassador at Constantinople, had important duties awaiting his return to the Bosphorus. So that he had to submit to the necessities of his position, and not only to diagnose the sickness of Egypt in the short space of time available to him, but to prescribe the appropriate remedies.

If Lord Dufferin's report has been sometimes regarded as conceived in a sanguine spirit, it was written, we must remember, in an extraordinarily happy hour. It was the hour of reaction after more than a year of anxiety. The gloom of the past had been dispersed, and there was assurance for the future. Never again would a mutinous army be in possession of the soil of Egypt. Never again would there be an Alexandria massacre. Never again would Europeans be driven from their homes in Egypt by the scowl of the fanatic, or by the rancour of the mob. Europeans in Egypt could not believe that British soldiers had been sent to-day, to be withdrawn to-morrow. There was a long task to be accomplished; and, until it was

accomplished, the red-coat would answer for order. So far in Egypt. In England, too, the sun shone on the situation. The investor, the merchant, the manufacturer, and the general British public were alike in the best of humour. To the one there was security; to the second, a promise of further gain; to the third, fresh markets; to the last, satisfaction in the knowledge that their countrymen, now unencumbered with a partner, would put an end to the tyranny of Khedives and Pashas, and settle the Egyptian question in their own way. Lord Dufferin was far too able and experienced a statesman to overestimate the importance of the elation around him, or to be blind to danger ahead. But while, on the one hand, he may have thought it impolitic to nip these fair hopes in the bud, he must have felt that the best guarantee for success in the future was confidence and enterprise in the present. Lord Dufferin may very possibly have shared—for it would have been difficult to restrain himself from sharing—in the general hopefulness. His bright personality, and the warmth of his sympathetic and joyous nature, gave deeper colour to the sanguine views around him; and seemed, in themselves, an augury of happier days. But he knew, as few knew, the difficulties of the task before Great Britain; and he was only too well aware that those who were to be charged with its execution would be confronted with uncertainties sufficiently serious to damp the most exuberant enthusiasm.

The duty imposed upon Lord Dufferin seemed definite enough. He was to advise upon the measures to be taken to restore Egypt to stability, and maintain it in the path of progress. But the business was not so simple as this would seem. It was essential, if he was to advise, that Lord Dufferin should be informed within what limits, and in what conditions his advice was desired. There



were factors in the problem which were all-important. Was the British occupation to cease at an early date? If not, for how long would it be prolonged? What independence of action was to be accorded to the Khedive? Was there to be a Protectorate? What would be the rôle of the British Agent and his subordinate English officials? Was the business of Great Britain to be that of Adviser only, or was it simply to be a policy of scuttle?

There would be no Protectorate. That everybody knew. That there would be no scuttle Lord Dufferin could only hope; that advice would be abundantly and lavishly offered he probably felt pretty sure. But all this did not carry him a step further. The crux of the situation lay in the probable duration of British occupation. The whole treatment to be prescribed must depend on that. But it was here precisely that his instructions failed him. The Cabinet in London could not advise him; for, even if they were of one mind on the matter, they could not foresee the course of circumstances. All they could say was that the sooner British troops left Egypt the better they would be pleased; and that the more liberal were the elements introduced into the future programme, the more they would be welcomed by a Liberal Government, and approved by Liberal constituencies in England.

The Foreign Secretary's instructions to Lord Dufferin had been conveyed in a despatch of November 3rd, 1882. "The success of the military operations undertaken by Her Majesty's Government to suppress the late rebellion in Egypt," wrote Lord Granville, "has placed them in a position of authority, and of corresponding responsibility, in regard to the future government of that country. Her Majesty's Government, while desiring that British occupation should last for as short a time as possible, feel bound not to withdraw from the task thus imposed on them,

until the administration of affairs has been reconstructed on a basis which will afford satisfactory guarantees for the maintenance of peace, order, and prosperity in Egypt, for the stability of the Khedive's authority, for the judicious development of self-government, and for the fulfilment of obligations towards Foreign Powers. These objects are in the real interest of Egypt, of this country, and of Europe." The despatch goes on to enumerate the principal measures bearing on the reorganization of the Government, with which Lord Dufferin would be called upon to deal.

It will be seen that the indications of the British Government's views were vague in the extreme as to the length of military occupation, and the character of the means to be taken for putting matters on to a more satisfactory footing. What was meant by a basis which would afford satisfactory guarantees? The question turned mainly on the meaning to be read into that expression. There is a basis of constitutional contrivances by which guarantees can be multiplied and remultiplied, according to the ingenuity of their author. There is a basis of material guarantees to be found only in the character and capacity of the people concerned, in the balance of power, in the past history and present development of a community. The first may be furnished in a few weeks; the latter may not—in the case of Egypt, probably would not—be forthcoming in a century. Where was Lord Dufferin to find the guarantees required, within a comparatively short limit of time? His report shows how he sought to meet the difficulty.

There can be no doubt as to Lord Dufferin's personal views. He unmaskes them clearly at the close of his report. His desire was for the "masterful hand of a Resident." But he did not put forward this proposal, he wrote, because it would have been not only wholly opposed to the views

of Mr. Gladstone and his Cabinet, and therefore impossible to urge with success, but because it was not in much accord with the popular sentiment of the hour. There could be no practical end to serve by propounding a plan which was foredoomed to rejection. There was a feeling in England that as the Egyptian revolt had raised the cry of self-government, some measure of self-government should be accorded. A Liberal Government looked with unction on such an issue; the British public, profoundly ignorant in Egyptian matters, but pleased to see its most characteristic feature reflected in all waters, acquiesced. Too great stress has been sometimes laid on Lord Dufferin's generous recognition that the metamorphic spirit of the age was working even in Egypt; as on his brilliant metaphor that, like her own Memnon, she had not remained irresponsive to the beams of the new dawn; that the lips of Egypt had trembled, if they had not articulated. This was only to recall to his countrymen, with characteristic felicity of language, that so far from her being capable of self-government, the breath of a free spirit had but now for the first time touched Egypt. But if the Resident and the masterful hand were thrust into the background, it was not long before, in accordance with Lord Dufferin's forecast of the inevitable, they asserted themselves. The masterful hand, if not of a Resident, at least of an Agent so closely resembling a Resident as to be with difficulty distinguishable, has "bent matters largely to his will," as Lord Dufferin would have had them bent. The hesitation of Great Britain to face the consequences of armed intervention between an Oriental Government and its disaffected subjects has been overborne under influence of stress and storm. The circumstances were sufficiently different from those of India to give the Cabinet pause in following Indian precedents. Yet there was no long



hesitation ; for we shall find Lord Granville, a few months later, and in course of time, Lord Rosebery, not only adopting Lord Dufferin's rejected prescription, but heartily belabouring the patient for making wry faces over the mixture.

If, then, Egypt was not to be governed from without, Lord Dufferin's task was to devise means by which it could be tolerably well governed from within. The aim to be kept prominently in view was the furthering of reform, for to reform the British Cabinet was pledged. Here he was met at once by the difficulty that he did not know how long the British occupation would last. All that he could do was to draw up a system of check and safeguard against arbitrary misrule, which, while not impeding the ordinary and ordered course of administration, would make habitual abuse difficult. Even if the occupation should cease at an earlier date than he would have desired, these Institutions, as he termed them, though they would not assist reform, would at least stand in the way of the oppressor. Meanwhile, British officials must remain to carry on the work they were engaged in. That was an essential part of the plan. But he made it a cardinal point in his scheme that if the institutions were to strike root, and if the British element in the administration was to be an effective aid to Egypt, the occupation must not hastily be withdrawn. He used his scheme, in fact, even while introducing it, as a strong argument for prolonging the occupation. "It is absolutely necessary to prevent the fabric we are about to raise from tumbling to the ground the moment our sustaining hand is withdrawn." Therefore it must have "time to consolidate. The persons who have staked their future on its existence must have some guarantee that it will endure." The labour of the representatives about to be appointed in the new Council

must be *in vacuo*; that is, they must not be disturbed by interference, still less by violence, from without. Again, "we can hardly consider the work of reorganisation complete, or the responsibilities imposed on us by circumstances adequately discharged, until we have seen Egypt shake herself free from initial embarrassments." If we bear this in mind, if we remain till time has consolidated the fabric, we may "succeed in making a vitalised self-existent organism instinct with evolutionary forces." All this postulated time. As the Resident was deemed impossible, the institutions and the British officials were presented as the next best guarantee against misgovernment; but with the all-important rider that the popular element in his plan was not to be left to the tender mercies of Khedives or Pashas till such time as it had fairly taken root, and was strong enough to stand by itself. In plain words, while Lord Dufferin advocated the "Institutions," he advocated co-equally, and co-existently, occupation of Egypt by British troops for an indefinite time, and the maintenance in office meanwhile of the British officials whom he found when he arrived in Egypt, and to whose number he proposed considerably to add.

What were the "Institutions"? The scheme, in a condensed form, was this.

Each village or circumscription should elect by manhood suffrage a representative as the custodian of the vote of the Commune. The communal representatives would elect the members of a Provincial Council varying in number from four to eight. The members of the Provincial Councils would elect sixteen members to a Legislative Council of twenty-eight, the other twelve being nominees of the Khedive. These members should hold office for life, or at least for a term of years. The communal representatives, besides electing the members of the



Provincial Councils, would also choose two representatives for each province, who, in combination with a proportionate number chosen by the towns, would amount to about forty-six deputies, and be termed the General Assembly. The General Assembly would also contain eight Ministers, and twenty-eight members of the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council would meet at least once annually. The initiative would rest with the Government, no right of veto being given to the Legislative Council. But no law or decree involving administrative changes should be promulgated or acquire legal force until submitted to the Council, who would enjoy full liberty of criticism, discussion, and suggestion. The Budget would be submitted to them for their information and cognizance, so far as international obligations were not concerned. They might pass under review all departmental expenditure; nor would there be any limit to their powers of inquiry. The General Assembly and Legislative Council in joint session would, when called together, discuss larger questions affecting the whole interests of the country, such as the equalization of the land tax, canalization, land revenue survey and assessment, the imposition of fresh financial burdens. The powers of the General Assembly would be analogous to those of the Legislative Council; but it would be endowed with an absolute right of veto, in respect of any measure involving the imposition of fresh taxation.

"Sympathetic advice and assistance" were to be the duties of the British officials; a "political existence untrammelled by external importunity" was to be the rôle of the Egyptian people. The influence which the progress of events had required us to exercise was not to degenerate into an irritating and exasperating display of authority. But Lord Dufferin insisted with the greatest emphasis that for some time to come European assistance in the various

departments of Egyptian administration would be absolutely necessary. He spoke in the highest terms of the value of the labours of the little group at that time employed in Egypt; "were they to be withdrawn, the whole machinery of Government would fall into inextricable confusion." Being, however, a statesman of liberal views, a man of large human sympathies, and an Irishman of much experience, he wished, while maintaining and even increasing this indispensable foreign element, to make provision for possibilities of self-government by laying broad, if unassuming foundations, on which others, hereafter, might effectively build.

Fortunately, aspects of the Egyptian problem had to be dealt with, more positive in their nature, and less dependent on political or parliamentary exigencies, than the problems of self-government or of representative councils. Such were Irrigation, the Army, Justice and the Constabulary. On each of these Lord Dufferin expressed himself at much length, and his proposals in regard to the great majority of them have served as a basis of reconstruction to the present hour. The chaos and confusion of the Administration in 1883 may be gathered abundantly from Lord Dufferin's pages, which bear evidence in every line of the thoroughness of his inquiry. He took immediate measures to obtain the best available officers for the Irrigation Department from India. He reorganized the army on a purely Egyptian basis, declining, in spite of much advice to that effect, to make of it a pretorian or a Mameluke guard. On the two points, however, upon which, with wisdom acquired after the event, we know now that the course of Egyptian Administration was to turn during immediately ensuing years, Lord Dufferin said little. The finances of Egypt were disposed of in the course of a few sentences, and a

single section of four paragraphs dismissed the Soudan. At the time when he was writing his report, Lord Dufferin rightly thought that Egypt could hardly be expected to acquiesce in a policy of withdrawal. He advised the abandonment of Darfur with perhaps a part of Kordofan, and the retention of the provinces of Khartum and Sennaar. He felt little confidence in the effort about to be made, under General Hicks, with the aid of his "raw, undisciplined, and disheartened levies." He urged the construction of a railway from Berber to Suakin as soon as peace permitted. Peace was not restored till sixteen years after Lord Dufferin wrote; but within seven years of the return of peace that line has approached completion.

If Lord Dufferin left out of his purview discussion on the possible consequences of the events then passing in the Soudan, or of still graver calamities which he foresaw were impending, it was because the instructions of the British Cabinet were to turn a blind eye to that quarter. Lord Dufferin wrote of the Hicks expedition as an expedition undertaken by that unfortunate officer "after entering the Egyptian service, on his own responsibility"; adding that neither he nor Sir Edward Malet—the British Consul-General—was concerned in it. This was in accord with the policy of the Cabinet. But whatever might be the view of the Cabinet, Egypt, in any case, was deeply concerned in the Hicks expedition, and Great Britain was responsible for Egypt. However embarrassing it may have been to be compelled to include the Soudan in the scheme of Egyptian settlement, it should have been obvious to the Government which had assumed the responsibilities of Egypt that no settlement could possibly hold good from which the Soudan factor was eliminated. It may have been hoped in London that the Egyptian authorities, when they had further ex-

perience of the futility of their policy, would desist from it. That the tables would be turned, and that instead of Egypt invading the Soudan, the Soudan would in a short time be attempting the invasion of Egypt, was a possibility no one at that time foresaw. The force and direction of the storm that was gathering were nowhere suspected. Who could guess that the centre of disturbance was not Cairo, but Khartum? Much of the interest which would otherwise have been felt in Lord Dufferin's report was for a time lessened because, during the months immediately following its appearance, and for many weary months afterwards, events took a course of which he had not been forewarned, and difficulties thickened round us in Egypt against which there could not have been foreseen the need of provision. The truth is that in our habitual ignorance of the forces which stimulate the Muhammadan East, we failed to realize the extent to which the preaching of the self-styled Mahdi had found an echo in the fierce breasts of his hearers. What seemed incredible was dismissed as impossible. In estimating probabilities east of Suez there are few surer ways than this of inviting disaster.



## CHAPTER II

### THE GATHERING OF THE STORM

Departure of Lord Dufferin—Appointment of Sirdár—Of Chief of the Constabulary—Of Procureur-Général—Of Financial Adviser—Colonel Scott-Moncreiff summoned from India—Legislative Council and General Assembly decreed—Appointment of Indemnities Commission—Cholera in Egypt—Transfer of Agency from Sir Edward Malet to Sir Evelyn Baring—Departure of Sir Edward Malet—Position of affairs in Egypt at time of Sir E. Baring's arrival—State of affairs in the Soudan—Enforcement of economies in Egypt—Decision of British Government to withdraw from Soudan—Sir Evelyn Baring's concurrence therein—Resignation of Sharif Pasha's Ministry—Nubar Pasha forms a Ministry—Khedive's approval of withdrawal from the Soudan.

LORD DUFFERIN left Egypt on the 3rd of May, 1883, three months after he had submitted his report. Before he embarked, many of his recommendations had been put into effect. Sir Evelyn Wood, under the title of Sirdár, had taken charge of the new Egyptian Army (the old army had been disbanded by Khedivial decree of December the 20th of the previous year). General Valentine Baker had assumed command of the new constabulary. Colonel (now Sir Colin) Scott-Moncreiff had been summoned from India as head of the Irrigation Department. Sir Benson Maxwell, formerly Chief Justice of the Straits Settlements, had taken over the reform of the Tribunals. A Financial Adviser (Sir Auckland Colvin) had replaced the Dual Control, but with somewhat less authority. He was to be chosen and appointed by the Khedive, to whom he would be directly responsible. He would attend the Council of Ministers

only when invited by the President of the Council. He was to have the power of examining into financial questions, and of giving his opinion upon them, within the limits which the Khedive and his Ministers might determine. The Comptrollers had possessed the right to attend all Councils, and had been nominated by their respective Governments. But what was wanting in the terms of the decree appointing the Financial Adviser was more than supplied by the great influences behind him, and by the paramount position of Great Britain in Egypt. A decree had also been issued organizing the Provincial and Legislative Councils, the General Assembly, and the Council of State; another decree established the terms of the electoral law. An International Commission had been appointed in January, 1883, and had since sat uninterruptedly, to liquidate the claims of all whose property had been destroyed or materially injured in the burning of Alexandria. It had been appointed by the Egyptian Government, after much correspondence between the British Cabinet and the various European Powers interested, and in conformity with the terms of their consent. Indemnities were to be paid for *bona fide* losses in trade, stock, in furniture, and in buildings. But property was not to include indirect losses, loss of specie, or *objets d'art*, unless exposed in shops for sale, or placed in pledge. Bonds and securities of all kinds were excluded, as (with minor exceptions) were rents and crops. Indemnities for buildings were to be calculated on the value which they bore before destruction. The task of adjudging indemnities was invidious, but the Commission was composed of carefully selected officials, and commanded confidence. Provision had been thus made for meeting the urgent claims both of the European and the native community, as well as for restoring general confidence. In giving new ribs and new machinery to the

half-foundered vessel of the Egyptian State, in seeing her floated safely off the stocks, and in breaking over her, as she left her stays, the sparkling wine of his eloquence, Lord Dufferin had done his share of the enterprise. For the rest, the skill of the commander and the efficiency of the crew must take the ship out into deep waters and navigate her on her long journey.

Fate was not kind to British effort in Egypt even in those early days. Misfortune dogged its footsteps, and disappointment awaited it, as though trial was to be made of its fitness. In the track of war followed pestilence. Little more than a month after Lord Dufferin had left Egypt, cholera was announced at Damietta. The last visitation had been in 1865. Since 1883 there have been epidemics in 1895 and in 1902. Dating from the British occupation, there have been no less than three epidemics of cholera in two-and-twenty years. The disease appeared first in Damietta on June 22nd; on June 25th it was at Mansourah; on July 3rd at Alexandria; and on July 16th it entered Cairo. It was here that the disease was most virulent, nor could it be driven out till the middle of September. In Alexandria it was less severe, but there came a fresh outburst towards the close of the year, and it was not stamped out till November. Surgeon-General Hunter and other medical officers were promptly sent from England, and opportunity was taken to examine and report on the sanitation of towns and villages, more especially of Cairo and Alexandria. Registration of deaths was too imperfect to permit of any reliable estimate being formed of the mortality. Surgeon-General Hunter wrote that the number of deaths reported up to July 31st was said to be 12,600, but he was inclined to think that the true figure was nearly double that total. By August 21st the registered total had swelled in round figures to 25,000 deaths. Though

the virulence of the epidemic had spent itself by that date, it lingered for many weeks later. The total number of registered deaths was 58,369. But the actual mortality was far in excess of this figure, and was estimated at from 80,000 to 100,000. The researches of Professor Koch during this epidemic resulted in the discovery of the cholera bacillus ; but the prevention and control of cholera epidemics are still matter for anxious investigation.

Here are sketches of the sanitary condition prevailing in Egypt at that time. Rivers and canals, instead of being protected from pollution, were ordinarily made use of as the easiest and readiest means of disposing of dead animals, refuse, and filth. The cemeteries gave off disgusting odours, and were in close proximity to human habitations. The hospitals were noisome places, unfit for human beings. There were no public latrines, and streets and gullies were utilized to that end. In Cairo a custom was found to prevail among the Copts of interring their dead in vaults, over which houses were built to accommodate the guardians of the tombs and their families, as well as the priests of the churches and convents around which these grave-houses had been erected.

Whole quarters of Cairo, Boulak more especially, were inhabited by the poorer classes, whose houses consisted of mud hovels containing one room, in which entire families lived with their donkeys, fowls, and other live stock. The entrance was a mere opening, through which a man of ordinary height would almost have to crawl. The roofs were covered with filth of every description.

At Cairo on July 25th, and at Ramleh, near Alexandria, on August 17th, the Khedive, Tewfik Pasha, visited the cholera wards, on the first occasion walking through the barracks and sanitary hospitals of the Egyptian troops ; on the second, inspecting the British field hospital. The



Khedive entered the tents of the cholera patients, and set an example to his subjects which some of them badly needed ; for the subordinate medical staff in the Egyptian army was panic-stricken. The British officers serving with the Egyptian army themselves attended on the cholera sick, washing the bodies after death and burying them. The Egyptian soldiers were loud in their gratitude for the devotion displayed by their officers ; it was evidence that they had passed under a new regime, and that the brutal old system, at least in regard to the army, had passed away. General (now Lord) Grenfell tells us that the first case he saw in the Military Hospital was placed within a circle of chloride of lime ; the doctor, until remonstrated with, remaining outside the cordon. Another doctor completely broke down, and communicated his fears to his attendants. A third had received no medical education ; a fourth was sullen and surly, and did his work only under supervision. Major (now Sir Reginald) Wingate especially distinguished himself, struggling with laziness and disobedience, and spending his leisure moments at the bedside of his patients. Major Chamley Turner,<sup>1</sup> when attendants were useless, performed the most menial duties of the hospital ; and it was only by positive order, when he was himself incapacitated for work through sickness and devotion to his duties, that he ceased to attend on his sick soldiers. It was in these wards that the germs of confidence in their officers were first sown in the breasts of Egyptian soldiers, which blossomed later at Ginnis and at Sarras, and which bore rich fruit on the final field of Omdurman.

On September 12th, 1883, Sir Edward Malet was enabled, doubtless much to his satisfaction, to telegraph to

<sup>1</sup> This fine officer was soon afterwards drowned in the Nile at Keneh, in Upper Egypt.

London that Sir Evelyn Baring had arrived, and that the direction of Her Majesty's Agency at Cairo had been transferred to him. Sir Edward had spent in Egypt more than three years of great difficulty and anxiety, of which the burden had rested mainly on his shoulders. His frank and genial address, his unfailing courtesy to men of every grade and of all nationalities, combined with the sincerity and loyalty of his nature, had made him many friends, and had secured for him general confidence not only among his countrymen, but throughout the circle of foreigners. While staunchly supporting the authority of the Khedive, he was far from indifferent to the abuses of the Khedive's Government. But his rôle was diplomacy; he did not claim to be a financier. Having seen Tewfik Pasha safely through the troubles of 1882, he might fairly sigh for the promotion which would transfer him to more congenial employment in a less intemperate atmosphere. He carried with him to Brussels the regard and respect of every European colony in Egypt, the goodwill of all Egyptians with whom he had been brought into contact, and the genuine regret of the Khedive and of his Ministers. His last public utterance in Egypt was a plea for justice to the Egyptian; and haply in his retirement he watches with interest the gradual fulfilment of the desire expressed in his parting aspiration.

Sir Evelyn Baring had left Cairo for Calcutta, in 1880, on the morrow of the passing of the Law of Liquidation. In India, as during his tenure of the Comptrollership, he had shaped his financial policy to meet the needs, and to ease the burdens, of the poorer classes of the community. He had left Egypt in 1880 in a seeming way to recovery; he returned to find it on the verge of collapse. "Matters seem much as I left them," was his comment; "the

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coupon is due ; there is no money in the treasury ; and Blum has in readiness his little scheme." (Blum, later a Knight of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, banker by profession, Israelite by birth, by nationality Austrian, had been for some years Under-Secretary of Finance, in which capacity he had given, as he was yet in the future to give, proof of endless energy and unfailing aptitude in all financial questions.) But Sir Evelyn soon found to his cost that matters were in truth far worse than in 1880. The new Agent had been but a few weeks in office when he received news of the defeat of Egyptian troops at Tokar, and of the death of the British Consul, Lynedoch Moncrieff, who had accompanied them. If in the early months of 1883 the situation in the Soudan had seemed obscure, there could be little doubt now that it was desperate ; "when sorrows come, they come, not single spies, but in battalions." The air was full of apprehension and rumour. The Egyptian Government was in the gravest anxiety as to Suakin and the neighbouring posts, where the garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar were in imminent danger, while Suakin itself was threatened. Even greater solicitude was felt as to the fate of General Hicks and his army, of which no definite news had been received since September 17th. There was little cash in the treasury, and no reserve. In November came news that General Hicks and his army had been overwhelmed.<sup>1</sup> From that time there raged by day and night a constant and turbid flood of telegrams and letters to and from the Agency in Cairo, repeating in various tones the tale of uninterrupted disaster. On December 8th came further news of defeat of Egyptian troops by rebels within a few miles of Suakin. Of seven hundred who had left Suakin on the 2nd of

<sup>1</sup> This was the moment, of all others, which the Turkish Government chose to press for the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt.



December, only fifty returned. Tokar and Sinkat were surrounded, and their garrisons were expected to fall for want of provisions. At Suakin there was panic. On the same day disquieting news was received of the attitude of the people at Sennaar. Mr. Power, the "Times" correspondent, who had accompanied General Hicks, but had remained sick at Khartum, where he had been recently nominated Consul, telegraphed that the state of affairs in that town was desperate. In three days the town might be in the hands of the rebels. "If Khartum falls," he wired, "all Lower Egypt goes; and every man, from Khartum to Assiut, will be in arms to join the Mahdi as he passes."

It had become clear by this time that a storm was about to break over Egypt such as the country seemingly had not been called upon to meet since the plagues of the Exodus had been poured out upon the Pharaohs. Egypt had no reliable troops; her internal administration was in the utmost disorder; Alexandria was in ruins, and the European population of that unhappy city, the commercial centre of the country, were clamouring for the payment of the indemnities awarded them. There was no money wherewith to pay them, for the financial prospects were little better than the military outlook. The worse the latter grew, the more were the former darkened. The fellaheen were adding to the general unrest by refusing to meet their engagements to their creditors. They had been told by Arábi that the Government would pay their debts, and when undeceived, they blamed, not the rebel leader, but the Khedive. The conviction was not to be removed that the promise made them in 1882 would have been redeemed in 1883 had the Turk made way for the Egyptian. As if in mockery of the life-and-death struggle with rebellion and insolvency



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in which Egypt was engaged, there continued to issue from the Legislature a long procession of decrees, approving maritime codes and commercial codes of procedure, and appointing members of the Legislative and the Provincial Councils, and of the General Assembly. The Bedouins of the Fayoum expressed an enlightened desire to find seats in the Legislative Assembly. The draft of a decree for the imposition of a house-tax on Europeans, who, under the Capitulations, were exempt from that and other direct imposts, was flitting like a firefly among the Cabinets of Europe, now traceable, now plunged in obscurity. Control of much that was passing was beyond the power of any man; but among all the confusion surrounding him, in momentary apprehension of fresh calamities, in the babel of tongues and among the distraction of divided counsels, there were two clear, central points which Sir Evelyn Baring could seize upon and maintain. He could make it known that he would lend the full weight of his advice to withdrawal from the Soudan, and he could insist on the greatest economy being exercised in Egypt. All the Powers which had assented to the Liquidation were more or less interested in the finances; and, if insolvency ensued, a door would be opened through which Internationalism would not be slow to enter. France would be foremost in seizing the opportunity; and it was of the utmost importance, therefore, that the equilibrium of the finances, as far as possible, should be maintained. This was more a European than an Egyptian question.

In neither respect could Sir Evelyn Baring hope to succeed without serious difficulty. Sharif Pasha, the Prime Minister, presented a Note on December 21st, 1883 urging the retention of the Soudan, and desiring the assent of Her Majesty's Government to soliciting Turkey for the loan of ten thousand soldiers. A few days later

he so far modified his request as to express the willingness of his Cabinet, should the ten thousand soldiers not be forthcoming, to retain only the country between Khartum and Wadi Halfa, and to abandon to Turkey the administration of the shores of the Red Sea and of the Eastern Soudan. To the attempt to retain any part of the Soudan in the then existing circumstances Sir Evelyn Baring was immovably opposed; but he saw that if Sharif Pasha and his colleagues found themselves overruled, they would in all probability resign. Who was to replace them? What public man of any note in Egypt would take upon himself the odium of abandoning the Soudan? Then, again, it was no easy matter to ensure economies. In the first place, the margin left by the Commission of Liquidation in 1880 had been jealously small. The Commissioners had estimated revenue and expenditure, and divided each into two portions: the one to meet the needs of the Government, the other to provide for the service of the Debt. The expenditure on the Debt was an obligatory charge. If the specific revenues assigned to it were in any year more than were needed, they were devoted to a sinking fund; if the revenue fell short of what was needed for dividend and sinking fund, the Government must furnish the difference. But if, as was far more likely, the revenue assigned to the Government for its own expenditure fell short, the deficit must be met by the Government as best it could. It was found that the estimated State expenditure for the coming year 1884 exceeded the expenditure of 1880 by £E.400,000. Sir Evelyn Baring urged upon the Government the reduction of their estimates by £E.350,000. A Commission was appointed to examine the matter. To set an example, the Khedive spontaneously abandoned a tenth of his Civil List, and a tenth of the Civil List of his

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eldest son. The Financial Adviser, Mr. (now Sir) Edgar Vincent, who had succeeded Sir Auckland Colvin on November 5th, 1883 (the latter having returned to India), offered a similar reduction on his salary. Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, the Accountant-General, Mr. Caillard, head of the Customs, Blum Pasha (of the "little scheme"), and others, were equally willing to have their salaries diminished.

With the spirit thus shown in high places, economies might more easily be made all along the line. But if economy on any considerable scale was to be insisted on, what of reforms in administration? It was certain that these would increase expenditure. Jail, and police reforms, school reforms, reforms in hospitals; all these postulated, among other things, a liberal use of bricks and mortar. Competent officials on sufficient salaries must be appointed. Inspectors must be provided for. If speculation was to be punished, existing salaries must in many cases be increased. Above all, the need for very considerable funds was indispensable in the service of irrigation; and a costly staff of irrigation officers had arrived, or was on its way from India. Existing establishments, at the first whisper of the word economy, would draw their ranks together in a common instinct of self-preservation. Towards the close of Ismail's reign, and in the early months of his successor, establishments had been reduced below their needful strength. In the absence of funds it had been impossible to fill up vacancies. After the Law of Liquidation had been promulgated, and solvency restored, an abnormal number of appointments had been made to restore the strength of establishments, and these were again threatened. Much that had been hoped for in the way of reconstruction and advance must be again indefinitely abandoned. It was inevitable that such a decision should be in the highest degree unpopular. Hell



hath no fury like a public service during a period of reduction. Those who are responsible for the finances may urge the plea of necessity. Necessity, replies the sufferer, is the mother of invention. Having no invention, but shears only, or suppression, you, finance minister, financial adviser, or by whatever name you call yourself, have no business to be where you are. There is no reasoning with a starving man.

Retrenchment, and retirement from the Soudan, therefore, opened out no pleasant prospect. If the one offered the certainty of general discontent, the other would lead to the resignation of Sharif Pasha and his Ministry. Their resignation was not long in coming. On January 4th, 1884, there issued from the British Foreign Office the decision that Egyptian troops should be withdrawn to Wadi Halfa; and as definite an intimation that when the Agent spoke in the name of his Government it was for Ministers in Egypt to submit or to retire. The "masterful hand" had arrived. "I need hardly point out that in important questions, where the administration and safety of Egypt are at stake" (not safety only, but administration), "it is indispensable that Her Majesty's Government, as long as the provisional occupation of the country by English troops continues, be assured that the advice which, after full consideration of the views of the Egyptian Government, they may find it their duty to tender to the Khedive should be followed. It should be made clear to the Egyptian Ministers and Governors of Provinces that the responsibility which for the time rests on England obliges Her Majesty's Government to insist on the adoption of the policy which they recommend, and that it will be necessary that those Ministers and Governors who do not follow that course should cease to hold their offices." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Earl Granville to Sir E. Baring, Jan. 4th, 1884.



However inadequate their means of maintaining themselves in the Soudan might be, Sharif Pasha and his colleagues could not bring themselves to abandon it. International complications arising from finance had less terrors, possibly, for them than for the British Agent. Sharif Pasha, moreover, was not the man to submit to so naked an affirmation of *hoc volo, sic jubeo* as was embodied in Lord Granville's despatch. His range of vision might be limited; but he was a man of independence of character and of haughty spirit. On the 6th of January Lord Granville's despatch was communicated to Sharif Pasha. On the following day he and his Cabinet resigned. Riyáz Pasha, when addressed, would not take on himself the responsibility of evacuating the Soudan. Nubar Pasha, Armenian and Christian, did not labour under the difficulties besetting the Cairene Turks, and with his aid a new Cabinet was formed; the Khedive having intimated, in a few words of much dignity and restraint, that he approved the decision to withdraw to Wadi Halfa, and would give it his cordial support,

## CHAPTER III

### THE KHEDIVE AND HIS MINISTERS—THE MISSION TO KHARTUM

Sketches of some of the Khedive's Ministers—Sharif Pasha—Riyáz Pasha—Nubar Pasha—Character of the Khedive—Necessity of deputing an officer of high authority to the Soudan—Ignorance of British Cabinet as to the condition of affairs in the Soudan—Qualities required in the officer to be selected—Choice of General Gordon.

WHAT manner of man was this Khedive, and who were the Khedive's Ministers? A Minister, in the days of Ismail Pasha, resembled usually what is known as an animated picture. From time to time a figure issued into light from obscurity, and took visible shape in a brilliant foreground. For a space it would be seen to be moving, and gyrating, and instinct with seeming energy, yet always it moved in dumb show. Its lips would open, it would gesticulate; it would assume even attitudes of command. But the vision was unsubstantial. The tremulous quiverings of the outlines, and the scintillations—not its own—which accompanied it, betrayed the unreality of the apparition. Suddenly it would vanish into the obscurity from which it had emerged, to be replaced by a similar figure. Other times, however, other Ministers; and flesh and blood succeeded to the shadows who had grimaced as the Ministers of Ismail.

Of three who survived the wreck of Ismail and his fortunes, two were, alternatively, the agents through whom, from 1883 and onwards for the next ten years, British

authorities were called upon to work. Sharif Pasha never resumed office. He carried into his retirement the respect and regard of his many friends, and died in 1888. Peace to his memory, for he was a type of all that is best in the Osmanli. His comely presence had been long familiar in Cairo, where his manly bearing, his frank outspokenness, his quasi-military directness, and his cordial manners, had made him a popular favourite. To say that he had long and strenuously opposed financial reform and the European Control is to say that he was a Turk. But to add that he obeyed with little hesitation when called upon, by the Khedive, in September, 1881, at a great crisis to resume office, and loyally to work with the Comptrollers whom he had hitherto opposed, is to prove that he was a true friend to his country and a faithful subject to its Master.

Association with the Comptrollers, whom in past time he had opposed, must have been singularly distasteful to Sharif Pasha; but he overcame his repugnance and gave them the full strength of his support. Riyáz Pasha, on the contrary, had from the first thrown himself heart and soul into the struggle with Ismail Pasha which had been carried on by the Commission of Inquiry in 1878. He had been the consistent advocate of reform, and a fearless exponent of the vices and abuses of Ismail Pasha's Government. His knowledge had proved of great assistance in the inquiry, and he had established claims on the confidence of the British of which he was not wholly unconscious. Riyáz, like Sharif, was a Turk, but a Turk with a difference. A Turk is usually impassive, and Riyáz was compact of movement. A Turk is habitually apathetic and indolent; the vital spark in Riyáz consumed his meagre frame. Taciturnity is a note of the Turk, but Riyáz was as voluble as a cascade. When, with strident accents, he denounced his political

antagonists—and he denounced them whenever he found a friend to listen—his small frame trembled with excitement, and the rosary, which was invariably between his fingers, flew about like a thong of whipcord. He was the embodiment, at such times, of invective; *vividus vultus, vividi oculi, vividæ manus, denique omnia vivida*. If in courage, as in courtesy, he was a Turk, in knowledge of the details of business and in devotion to his duties he differed from most of his compatriots. Unshakable confidence in himself was equalled only by contempt for all who differed from him. While his enemies alleged that he had few of the qualities of a statesman, as an administrator, and as a man of unquestioned probity, it was admitted that he had not his equal among his countrymen.

Nubar's personality is so well known that presentation of him in these pages is superfluous. His name had been eminently connected with Egypt for more than thirty years. He had rendered yeoman service to Ismail Pasha in the matter of the firmans of 1866 and 1867, and he had achieved his greatest success in obtaining in 1876 the consent of the European Powers to the establishment of the Mixed, or international, Tribunals. By this measure the exclusive jurisdiction of the Consular Courts had been abolished in civil cases, so that natives in disputes with Europeans, or Europeans at law *inter se*, were made subject to the authority of the new Tribunals. By claiming and enforcing jurisdiction in suits against the Government itself, the Tribunals had precipitated the financial difficulties which led to Ismail Pasha's insolvency. It is conceivable that had Nubar foreseen that this would be the case, it would not have lessened his advocacy of the reform. In intellect, in acquirements, in experience, and in the supple arts of convincing men, Nubar Pasha was head and shoulders higher than any of his



contemporaries. He laid little claim to administrative skill, and at heart he may have despised it. But in skill of diplomacy, in command of language, in breadth of view, in personal charm, and in persuasive art, he had no equal in Egypt, and few superiors out of it. Irascible and imperious, and aiming at supremacy, he must have looked with no little disfavour on the influence of the Agency. No administrator himself, he underestimated the value of the strenuous group into whose hands administration was passing. To guide his adopted countrymen he trusted to institutions, to compromise, to conciliation, to finesse, to the hand of time, and to the finger of opportunity. The art of shepherding in the East is to lead. The sheep hear the shepherd's voice, and should follow him. But how if they will not hear, or hearing will not follow? That is as it may be, Nubar would probably have replied. But the good shepherd leads his flock, nevertheless; and it is better to be led than to be driven.

In Tewfik Pasha the Agent had his best ally. It was the Khedive, after all, who was most concerned, for the stake upon the table was the Khedivate of Egypt. A Minister might resign office to-day, and be summoned to resume it six months later. An intractable Riyáz could make room for a less intractable Nubar. But for the Khedive there could be no shifting of persons. For him it was matter *aut stantis aut cadentis imperii*. Tewfik Pasha had neither the subtlety of Nubar, nor the truculent tenacity of Riyáz, nor the bluff bonhomie of Sharif. But, born and wholly bred as he had been in Egypt, he was in sympathy with the native mind, and thoroughly understood Egyptian character. He had, moreover, in considerable measure, a quality in which his Ministers were mostly lacking. He had a very present and abiding sense of humour, which carried with it the power of looking at

matters personal to himself from the point of view of a disinterested spectator. The struggles, the mischances, the heat and the humiliation, of the political arena, had little in them to disturb a nature which, in the most critical as in the calmest moments, preserved its sense of detachment. When practically a prisoner in his own palace in Cairo, in the spring of 1882, it was less the danger to himself than the scenic incidents of the plot developing around him which absorbed his attention. He sat as in a royal box, criticizing with amusement the exits and the entrances of less exalted actors; and smiling, not without indulgence, at the pretensions, the foibles, and the uneasy self-consciousness of many of the chief performers. Throughout long months of anxiety, during 1882, when the air around him was full of panic and thick with hostile rumours, he preserved perfect calm. In Cairo, where he was virtually a prisoner; at his palace at Ras-el-tin in Alexandria, when every day his country was drifting nearer to war; in the bare and blazing streets of Alexandria, as he drove through them on his way back from Ramleh, where he had retired during the bombardment, his seeming indifference to his central share in the drama was conspicuous. Obviously, this was not a man to take arms against a sea of troubles, and, by opposing, end them. But neither was he the man to sulk or to offer sullen resistance, when constrained with deference, or counselled with respect, to adopt a course repugnant to his wishes. There was in Tewfik Pasha a reserve of reasonableness and sound judgment, and an honourable belief in the good faith of advisers whom he trusted, which are no mean substitute for experience directly acquired by long handling of public affairs. He had confidence in the English, and he especially felt the value of their support in the presence of French ambitions. But as he had no wish

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to be swallowed up by any Power, he aimed at being friendly with all. That such a man, placed in such a position, should sometimes incur the reproach of Mr. Feebleheart, or Mr. Facing-both-ways, is not surprising. But that he was capable of playing the rôle of honest Iago, imputed to him in the House of Commons, could have been affirmed only by personal or political enmity. Lord Granville, after due inquiry made, described the charge, in scathing words, as "having no *primâ facie* evidence, either legal or moral, in support of it."

When explaining to Lord Granville, in December, 1883, his views as to the total withdrawal of Egypt from the Soudan, Sir Evelyn Baring had pointed out that it would be necessary to send an English officer of high authority to Khartum, with full power to withdraw all the garrisons in the Soudan, and to make the best arrangements possible for the future government of that country. It having been decided by the British Cabinet to retire, the time had come when it was imperative that the officer of high authority should be chosen. That it would be a mission of extraordinary delicacy and danger there could be no doubt. But it was likely to be more than that; for (though the Cabinet and their advisers did not know it) much of the proposed retirement was impracticable. The garrisons to the south of Khartum were beyond the reach of Egyptian authority. The future government of that country was a question on which other than British and Egyptian Cabinets would be consulted. Viewed by the light of after-events—by that *sagesse après coup*, which has not the right, and should not indulge in the desire to criticize—nothing is more perplexing than the tardiness of all who were most deeply interested, and best informed, to recognize the character and extent of the great Soudan revolt. The



presence in the Soudan of a man claiming to be the Mahdi had in the space of two years turned the nomad and the fixed population alike into a horde of fanatical, irreconcilable warriors. A new power, known as the Dervishes, had arisen. In 1881 Muhammad Ahmed, now their Prophet and guide, had been as one crying in the wilderness. Following in the footsteps of his alleged forerunner, the founder of Islam, he had in brief course of time strengthened weak points in his pretensions with links of steel, and had enforced assent to his mission by the unassailable argument of success. After varying fortunes he had now, at the close of 1883, made himself master of so much of the territory of the Soudan as extends from the immediate neighbourhood of Khartum to the vicinity of Gondokoro, far south, and from the western boundary of Darfur to Sinkat in the proximity of the Red Sea. The few Egyptian garrisons within that area were separated by impassable distances, and were either contemplating surrender or, while cowering behind their fortifications, were awaiting destruction. Muhammad Ahmed had annihilated an Egyptian army of ten thousand men, led by a British commander. He had made himself master of the great provinces of Darfur and Kordofan; his Dervishes held the whole country between Berber and Suakin, both of which towns were in imminent danger. All this was known in Cairo, for the telegraph was working between Cairo and Khartum for many months after December, 1883. A British officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, of the 11th Hussars, who had been sent from Cairo towards the close of 1882 on a mission to the Soudan, had informed himself and his superiors as to the nature of the rising. Abdul Kádír Pasha, who was Governor-General of the Soudan in 1882 and 1883, had returned to Cairo in the course of the latter year, bringing with him the most alarming account



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of the widespread character of the rebellion. Notwithstanding all this, we find that the mission to be entrusted to the officer about to be selected was to withdraw garrisons, many of which were already inaccessible, and to do what was possible for the future government of a country, the population of which had given indisputable proof that they intended to govern it themselves.

Whether the duty to be entrusted to the envoy was practicable or not might possibly still have been regarded as an open question; but there could be no manner of doubt that the mission required a combination of the rarest qualities. Tact, discretion, devotion to orders, however painful their consequences, secrecy in counsel, promptness in execution, above all a sober and sane estimate of possibilities and of opportunities—these, and such as these, were the qualities needed and the methods which alone could ensure success. Added to them were required knowledge of the Soudan and its people, and the confidence both of black and of Egyptian troops. Of courage nothing need be said. No man could possibly be selected who did not possess courage in its highest form; namely, that which enables its possessor calmly to perform his duty in the presence of danger or death, with no comrades to stimulate him, and no witness to admire or to report.

In all the British Empire there were but one or two who were believed to possess the necessary qualifications. The late Sir Charles Wilson of the Royal Engineers was mentioned. Another possible choice was Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart. He had shown great aptitude for picking up information during his mission in the Soudan; his report was a model of brevity, completeness, and clearness, and was characterized by sense and moderation. Except that he was little known by the Egyptians at Khartum, and

had been but a short time in the Soudan, Colonel Stewart was admirably fitted to the charge. Had his name been more generally known, or had his career been more intimately associated with Africa, there might have been less hesitation in selecting him. But his value was recognized too late. The man most known in military and official circles, and enjoying the chief public esteem, was looked upon as the best man. The choice fell upon Major-General Charles Gordon.

## CHAPTER IV

### GENERAL GORDON AS ENVOY

General Gordon's past career—Instructions issued to him in London—His Memorandum thereon—Further instructions issued in Cairo—Explanation of apparent discrepancy between London and Cairo instructions—General Gordon endorses a policy of evacuation—His Memorandum of February—His letters and telegrams *en route* to Khartum—Arrival at Khartum—Presses nomination of Zebehr Pasha as his successor—Change in General Gordon's views as to evacuation—Decline of his influence in the Soudan—His resolve to stand by the beleaguered garrisons—Refuses to evacuate—Misapprehension of the situation in the Soudan prior to General Gordon's arrival in Khartum—Selection of General Gordon for the business of evacuation an error.

GENERAL GORDON had at this time nearly completed his fifty-first year. The record of his extraordinary career is too well known to need much recapitulation. As a younger man, when thirty-one, he had earned for himself, by brilliant service rendered to the Emperor of China, the name of Chinese Gordon. From 1874 to 1876, under Ismail Pasha, he had been Governor of the Egyptian Equatorial Province; and from 1877 to 1879 he was Governor-General of the Soudan, of the Equatorial Province, and of the Red Sea Littoral. Towards the close of 1879 he gave up this post in broken health; and after various appointments, none of which were held for long, he had betaken himself to Palestine to rest and recruit himself. While in Palestine, he had agreed to go to the Congo in the service of the King of the Belgians. But on being invited by Her Majesty's Government to retrace his steps to North Africa, he

accepted the mission to the Soudan, and was released from his engagement on the Congo.

It is not the design of these pages to touch so much as the fringe of the great Gordon controversy. Still less do they propose to record, except in briefest fashion, the military measures rendered necessary by the determination of General Gordon not to abandon Khartum. The day has not come when the events of that painful time can be impartially weighed and decided. Many who took part in them are alive; the political and personal passions acrimoniously engaged in 1884 and subsequent years, if dormant, are far from dead. The Gordon mission, however, fills too important a space in the history of modern Egypt, and its consequences were too momentous, to allow of all mention of it being omitted. This volume will limit itself to recording the instructions given to General Gordon in London and in Cairo, and to indicating, as far as possible, in his own words, the motives by which he was guided and the course that he adopted.

As originally sketched by Lord Granville, the mission of General Gordon was to be consultative. He was first and foremost to report on the military situation in the Soudan, and on the measures to be taken for the security of the Egyptian garrisons still in the country, and of the Europeans in Khartum. He was also to report on the best means of effecting the evacuation of the interior of the Soudan. These instructions were issued on January 18th, 1884. On January 22nd, when on his way to Egypt on board the s.s. "Tanjore," General Gordon recorded a Memorandum with reference to these instructions. There is no question in the Memorandum of mere reporting; whatever may have been the wording of his instructions, General Gordon writes that Her Majesty's Government had decided to send him to the Soudan "to arrange for



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the evacuation of these countries and the safe removal of the Egyptian employés and troops." He then goes on to dispose of the bear's skin before he has killed the bear. He would restore the country to the different petty Sultans who existed before Muhammad Ali's conquest. The Mahdi, he wrote, should be left altogether out of the calculation as regards the handing over the country. It should be optional with the Sultans to accept or to reject the Mahdi's supremacy. He would carry out the evacuation as far as possible according to the wishes of Her Majesty's Government and to the best of his ability ; and with avoidance, as much as might be, of all fighting. Colonel Stewart (who accompanied him) agreed in what he stated, adding that as it was impossible for Her Majesty's Government to foresee all the eventualities that might arise during the evacuation, it seemed to him the more judicious course to rely on the discretion of General Gordon and his knowledge of the country.

General Gordon treated the outbreak as a tribal rising ; and the weight of competent opinion continues to be in favour of the view that the revolt in the Soudan in 1882 arose principally from Egyptian tyranny. But is this view tenable? From 1877 to the close of 1879 General Gordon was himself the ruler of the Soudan ; Muhammad Ahmed began his mission early in 1881 ; the Soudan was in full revolt in the earlier months of 1882. Did misrule and abuse in so short an interval as that between the close of 1879 and (at the latest) the commencement of 1882 bring revolt to a head throughout the Soudan against Raouf Pasha, General Gordon's successor? Were not other causes at work which, combined with the preaching of Muhammad Ahmed, sufficiently account for the uprising? Raouf Pasha had been sent up to carry out a policy of strict economy ; and, in pursuance of that policy, he had disbanded and thrown

upon the world a very considerable number of trained and disciplined black soldiers. The presence of this element, coincident with deep and long-smouldering resentment at General Gordon's repressive measures against the great army of slave-dealers, whose slave-dealing was their chief source of income, must have directly played into the hands of the Mahdi when he called all Arabs to his standards. It must further be remembered that the fall of Ismail Pasha, and the revolt of Arábi, had greatly lessened Egyptian prestige in the Soudan, and prestige is nowhere more potent than among Muhammadans ; since those who enjoy it are regarded as predestined to victory.

Arrived in Cairo, General Gordon received on January 25th more explicit instructions through Sir Evelyn Baring, in which he expressed his entire concurrence. In the first place he was to bear in mind that the main end to be pursued was the evacuation of the Soudan. Some ten to fifteen thousand people, who wished to accompany the Egyptian garrisons, were to be withdrawn without loss of life. This policy, he was told, had been adopted, after very full discussion, by the Egyptian Government on the advice of Her Majesty's Government; it met with the full approval of the Khedive, and of the present Egyptian Ministry. As regards the best time and method of retreat, detailed instructions were unnecessary. At the General's request it was added that he thought the decision to retire from the Soudan should on no account be changed. The Egyptian Government concurred in the project of making a confederation of the petty Sultans who existed at the time of Muhammad Ali's conquest ; but it was to be fully understood that Egyptian troops were not to be kept in the Soudan merely with a view to consolidating the powers of the new Sultans of the country. The Egyptian Government, having the fullest confidence in General Gordon's

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judgment, knowledge of the country, and comprehension of the general line of policy to be pursued, gave him full discretionary power to retain the troops for such reasonable time as he might think necessary in order that the abandonment of the country might be accomplished with the least risk of life and property.

On the following day, January 26th, General Gordon received from the Khedive two firmans. The first, which appointed him Governor-General of the Soudan, was couched in general terms, bidding him God-speed; the second, which was more precise, ran as follows:—

“You are aware that the object of your arrival here and of your mission to the Soudan is to carry into execution the evacuation of those territories, and to withdraw our troops, civil officials, and such of the inhabitants, together with their belongings, as may wish to leave for Egypt. We trust that your Excellency will adopt the most effective measures for the accomplishment of your mission in this respect, and that after completing the evacuation, you will take the necessary steps for establishing an organized Government in the different provinces in the Soudan, for the maintenance of order and the cessation of all disaster and incitement to revolt.”

At a much later date, viz. on the 28th of March, Lord Granville, in the course of a despatch dealing with a subsequent phase of matters, explained that the British Cabinet, bearing in mind the exigencies of the occasion, had concurred in the instructions which virtually altered General Gordon's mission from one of advice to that of executing, or at least directing, the evacuation not only of Khartum, but of the whole Soudan. They had been willing that General Gordon should receive the very extended powers conferred upon him by the Khedive to enable him to effect his difficult task.



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The discrepancy between the instructions received by General Gordon in London, and the form in which they were ultimately embodied, has till the present time remained unexplained. But in a letter addressed by Lord Cromer to the "Times," which appeared in its issue of November 9th, 1905, the key to the riddle is furnished. The passages in that letter, relevant to the issue of the Gordon instructions, are as follows:—

"The original instructions issued in London to General Gordon on January 18, 1884, were that he was 'to consider and report upon the best mode of effecting the evacuation of the interior of the Sudan.' These instructions, as Sir Charles Dilke explained at the time in the House of Commons, were practically drafted by General Gordon himself. It has been very generally supposed that the initiative in changing those instructions came from Cairo, and that the Government of the day somewhat reluctantly approved of them subsequent to their issue. Some colour is, indeed, given to this view of the case from the following passage which is contained in a despatch addressed to me by Lord Granville on March 28, 1884:—

Her Majesty's Government, bearing in mind the exigencies of the case, concurred in these instructions, which virtually altered General Gordon's commission from one of advice to that of executing, or at least directing, the evacuation not only of Khartum, but of the whole Sudan, and they were willing that General Gordon should receive the very extended powers conferred upon him by the Khedive to enable him to effect his difficult task. ["Egypt No. 13 (1884)," page 5.]

"The true facts of the case are, that although I fully concurred in the alteration of the instructions, the proposal to alter them did not emanate from myself, nor, indeed, from any one in Cairo. On page 4 of 'Egypt No. 2 (1884)' the following brief despatch, addressed to me by Lord Granville on January 22—that is to say, whilst



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General Gordon was travelling from London to Cairo—is given :—

I enclose herewith a paper containing some suggestions made by General Gordon as to the steps which should be taken with regard to the present state of affairs in the Sudan.

Her Majesty's Government have not sufficient local knowledge to enable them to form an opinion as to the practicability of these suggestions, and I therefore authorize you, as time is valuable, either immediately to make the arrangements suggested, or to await General Gordon's arrival and consult with him as to the action to be taken. [Substance telegraphed.]

“It will be observed that, although allusion is made to General Gordon's suggestions, the suggestions themselves were not included in the Parliamentary paper. They were, as a matter of fact, six in number. I need here only allude to two of them.

“The first was that the Khedive should issue a decree ‘To the Peoples of the Sudan,’ in which the following passage occurred :—

I have commissioned General Gordon, late Governor-General of the Sudan, to proceed there as my Representative and to arrange with you for the evacuation of the country and the withdrawal of my troops. Her Majesty's Government, being most desirous of your welfare, have also appointed General Gordon as their Commissioner for the same purpose. General Gordon is hereby appointed Governor-General for the time necessary to accomplish evacuation.

“The second suggestion was that a proclamation, signed by General Gordon, should be issued ‘To the Peoples of the Sudan,’ in which the following passage occurred :—

I have accepted the post of Governor-General of the Sudan.

“As, when I received Lord Granville's authorization to act on General Gordon's suggestions, General Gordon himself was about to arrive in Cairo, I delayed action until I could have the advantage of discussing the matter with him. The result was the issue of the fresh instructions, under which General Gordon was appointed

Governor-General of the Sudan. It appeared to me at the time that, in view of the telegram dated January 22, I had every right to suppose that her Majesty's Government agreed to altering General Gordon's functions in a sense which would render them executive, and no longer 'merely advisory.'"

There were three main points on which General Gordon's efforts were to be concentrated; and they came in the following order:—

1. The immediate withdrawal from Khartum of all non-combatants, women, and children, European or otherwise, who wished to leave it when evacuation was carried out.
2. The complete evacuation of the Soudan by the entire garrison, inclusive of all classes and colours.
3. The establishment, if possible, after evacuation, of some system of government in the Soudan to replace the authority of the Khedive. But Egyptian troops were not to be kept in the Soudan to assist in establishing such a system of government.

At the close of January, or early in February, General Gordon drew up a Memorandum with the view of showing how he proposed to carry out the above instructions. His plan was:—

1. To send to Egypt all Egyptian employés' families and their belongings.
2. To replace these Egyptian employés by native Soudan officials under himself, thus forming the foundation of the future Government of the Soudan.
3. To concentrate the neighbouring tribes against the Hadendowa, and to open the roads from Suakin to Berber, and from Suakin to Kassala.
4. To relieve Sennaar, and the triangle between the Blue and White Niles, known as the Ghazireh.
5. To send up an expedition of five steamers to bring

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down the families of the troops of the Equatorial Provinces of Bahr-el-Gazal.

6. To arrange at Dongola for the exodus of those who remained at Darfur, if any such still existed.

A sketch accompanied the Memorandum, purporting to show the situation of the rebellion in the Soudan. The Memorandum came undated, but was received by Sir Evelyn Baring on the 4th of February.

To carry out this programme, General Gordon asked for the aid of five British officers, for six months. These officers were to be his agents. They were not to lead troops, or to enter into active operations, but to hold together the well-disposed Soudanese tribes against the pillaging tribes; the former were to suppress the rebellion at Sennaar and Suakin. The Soudanese who were "conservative of their property" were thus to fight the "Soudanese communists," and to form a "firm conservative government." The request for British officers was recalled by a letter received the following day (February 5th). Where, indeed, were British officers to be found, who would be content to see their dark allies fighting, possibly discomfited, but to take no part in the struggle?

Evacuation of the Soudan is not the leading feature of this scheme. Not only would General Gordon remain, but he desired to call British officers to his assistance. Native officials and conservative native tribes were to be the active operative element in his new organization. Whom these officials were to represent, or on whose behalf General Gordon himself, in assuming control of them, was to speak and act, is matter of conjecture. The "petty Sultans" have wholly disappeared from the scheme; apparently they never could be found. Pillaging tribes are described as the trouble; conservative tribes as the mainstay. The disorder is represented as being due to social upheaval.



Some tribes are conservative, some communist. The revolt is regarded as entirely tribal, not religious. The rebellion in the Ghazireh, and in the Eastern Soudan, is to be put down by conservative tribesmen. Of the Mahdi and his Dervishes, of the supernatural element in the dark atmosphere, no account is taken; nor do we learn what was to become of the Egyptian soldiery who formed the Soudan garrison.

The sketch map accompanying the Memorandum, as reproduced in a Blue Book, gives an imperfect idea of the area of the rebellion. Coloured patches showed its locality and intensity. Darfur, which is not included in the colouring, had been subdued two months previously by the Mahdi. Only in the neighbourhood of El Obeid does the shading show that the "rebellion is too strong to be touched." But, in truth, the whole of the Kordofan province was as inaccessible to any but the Dervishes as was El Obeid itself. Both El Obeid and Bara had long since fallen. General Hicks and his 10,000 men lay dead for the last eight weeks upon the sands and among the scrub of Shekan. The Hadendowas, in full revolt, were about to destroy another Egyptian army of some 4,000 men under General Baker. Where was an efficient "conservative tribe" to come from?

On the 8th of February, telegraphing from Abu Hamed on his way to Berber, General Gordon expressed his hope that the Cairo authorities would not have the slightest anxiety about the Soudan, where, with God's help, security would be restored within a month. Muhammad Ahmed would then no longer claim to be Mahdi. Tranquillity re-established, he would inform Cairo as to what measures would have to be taken. On the same day, the 8th of February, he wrote a long letter to the Agent expressing the opinion that the country was far less disturbed than had been



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reported. After sending to Cairo the families of all deceased employés, soldiers, etc., he would attempt the pacification of the country and the reopening of the communications. He would, to that end, suggest that the Government of Egypt should continue to maintain its position as a Suzerain power, nominate the Governor-General and Provincial Governors, and act as a supreme Court of Appeal. Its controlling influence should be moral only, and limited to giving advice. The prestige of the Cairo Government was not seriously shaken, and the people would look with horror on complete separation. He pressed that evacuation, but not abandonment, be the programme adopted. Colonel Stewart added his remarks, pertinently observing that a solution in the direction pointed out by General Gordon would altogether depend upon what policy Her Majesty's Government intended to pursue towards Egypt. If they meant to leave Egypt, then it would be better to abandon the Soudan. Otherwise he was for following General Gordon's advice. "Although I do not quite agree with him that the prestige of Cairo has not been greatly diminished, still I think sufficient of it remains to enable the Egyptian Government to exert a beneficial influence towards curbing the forces of disorder in the Soudan."

On February 14th General Gordon had arrived at Berber, and wired that the British authorities need not give themselves any further anxiety about that part of the Soudan. If the Blue Book may be trusted, he reported that the people, great and small, were heartily glad to be rid of a union which had only caused them sorrow. Six days previously, at Abu Hamed, in the course of the letter above referred to, he had stated that the people would look with horror on complete separation. On the same day (the 14th of February) he wired that three

months should suffice to seal the separation between the Cairo Government and the Soudan. On the 18th of February General Gordon arrived at Khartum, and met with an enthusiastic reception. He proclaimed Muhammad Ahmed (the Mahdi) Sultan of Kordofan, remitted half the taxes, burned bonds, released prisoners, destroyed instruments of torture, and pledged himself by proclamation not to interfere with domestic slavery. On the day of his arrival in Khartum he wired to Cairo proposing that Zebehr Pasha should be nominated by the British Government, under its moral countenance, as his successor, and should be made a Knight of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. Now Barabbas was a robber. Zebehr Pasha had been a mighty slave-dealer and powerful leader in the Soudan, who for the last ten years had been kept, in honourable seclusion, as a *détenu* at Cairo. He was by origin a member of the Jaalin tribe, which had joined the Mahdi. Colonel Stewart, again called on to express his opinion, hesitated about Zebehr Pasha, but he thought that whoever was appointed would be accepted for a time. Two days later, on February 20th, General Gordon sent Colonel de Coetlogon, one of General Hicks's officers who had been left in charge of the dépôt at Khartum, back to Cairo, "because, in my belief, there is not the least chance of any danger being now incurred in Khartum, which I consider as safe as Cairo. . . . You may rest assured that you leave a place which is as safe as Kensington Park."

The British Cabinet recoiled before the name of Zebehr Pasha. Public opinion would not for a moment admit, they said, of his selection. He had been one of the chief slave-dealers in the Soudan ; a very captain of that industry. His son had been hunted down and killed under General Gordon's orders. Was it possible that he should now be

sent to the Soudan with the moral countenance of the British Government to restore law and order, and to represent, in himself, that *auspiciū melioris ævi* which is the motto of the Order of St. Michael and St. George? Between slave-dealer and impostor, between Zebehr and Muhammad Ahmed, there was little to choose, but preference was scarcely to the former. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, speaking through Mr. Sturge, its Chairman, expressed its opinion that countenance in any shape of such an individual as Zebehr Pasha by the British Government would be a degradation for England and a scandal to Europe.

There was no stronger argument in favour of Zebehr Pasha's mission than that Sir Evelyn Baring supported it. No one knew better the nature and force of the objections which would be taken, or the quarters from which they would emanate. But probably he saw no middle course; it was either Zebehr or Mahdi. Neither General Gordon's proclamation contemplating the toleration of slavery, nor the mission of Zebehr, should, he wrote, be made too much of; for in any case, when the Soudan had been evacuated, slavery would be immediately re-established. Possibly Sir Evelyn Baring began also to see that if Zebehr was not employed, General Gordon would remain till he was escorted out of the country.

For from within a few days of his arrival in Khartum it became alarmingly evident that what General Gordon was about to aim at primarily, and before any other measure, was not evacuation, but a struggle having for its object the destruction of the power of the Mahdi. According to the Cairo instructions of January 26th, evacuation of the Soudan by Egyptian troops was not to be postponed merely with the view of establishing a new Government. But reversing the order of his instructions, General Gordon



now urged that the Mahdi should be "smashed up." If Zebehr was refused him, it had become clear before the close of February that he would withdraw neither the Khartum nor the Berber garrisons, until by some other means he had prevailed against the Mahdi. On February 27th he wired that the Mahdi "must be smashed up"; and almost from that day "smashing the Mahdi" became the sole object of his endeavour, to the indefinite postponement of evacuation.

The decision lay, in his judgment, between Zebehr and the Mahdi; "Zebehr," he wired on the 29th of February, "with £100,000." Zebehr was refused by the British Cabinet. If Zebehr might not come to his relief, was General Gordon's rejoinder, send Indian Moslem troops; if these are not available, send Turks. He appealed, through friends, to American and British millionaires to provide the needful funds. The thought uppermost in his mind, now that he was at the centre of events, was no longer primarily the rescue of the garrisons. Had he turned his energies to evacuation, he might have withdrawn at least a portion. Although it was evident that all could not be saved, it did not follow that all need be sacrificed. The Egyptian and black soldiers in Khartum and Berber might presumably have been withdrawn, had their removal been commenced as soon as General Gordon reached Khartum; for, almost immediately after his arrival, a large number of women and children were passed down into Egypt. He himself wired on the 26th of February that evacuation was possible. Nor was it needful for him to linger in order to arrange for future administration, for the Soudan had almost unanimously declared its adhesion to Muhammad Ahmed; and the British Government had expressed its wish that Egypt should retire from the Soudan whether or no any competent successor could be found.



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There can be little or no doubt that whatever illusions he may have previously entertained, soon after he arrived in Khartum the Envoy for the first time grasped the situation. He realized, at last, how formidable was the influence, and how widespread the authority, of the Mahdi. The veil fell from his eyes; and he foresaw vividly, in its full horror, the whole scope of the impending disaster. Partially to evacuate, was to abandon to their fate all the garrisons south of Khartum. That was a course which he could not bring himself to contemplate. *Noblesse oblige*; there is a nobility of nature which is far more imperative in its mandate than mere nobility of descent; and he could not, being the man he was, turn his back on old comrades when they were in dire distress. He entered, therefore, a protest against evacuation, at least till the Mahdi had been overcome. Failing assistance from outside in his contest with the Mahdi, he could at least throw in his lot with the garrisons. It was better to be *splendide mendax*, to disobey his Government's instructions, than to forfeit the confidence of his subordinates, and his own self-respect. From that time he contended that evacuation was a mistake, and should be postponed until the Egyptian Government destroyed the authority which had superseded its own. He resolved to wreck that authority. But he recognized the futility of his resources, and he saw that unless he was aided by troops from Great Britain or elsewhere, he could not master the Mahdi. With every precious hour that passed, evacuation, whether of Khartum or of Berber, was, in truth, growing more impossible. On March 1st, eleven days after reaching his destination, General Gordon wired that he felt the conviction that he should be caught in Khartum. But he could not be recalled, he said, nor could he possibly obey, even if he were recalled, until the Cairo employes were got

out from all the places where they were shut up. "I have named men to different places," he wired to the Agent on the 3rd of March, "thus involving them with the Mahdi. How could I look the world in the face if I abandoned them and fled? As a gentleman, could you advise this course?" The answer to this question would be found within the four corners of his own instructions. The chief object of his mission was to evacuate the Soudan. Before men were named to any places, evacuation, under the authority given him, was to be carried out. But since those instructions had been issued, the situation had assumed, in his eyes, a wholly different aspect. On the 9th of March he intimated that if the immediate evacuation of Khartum were decided on, he would ask Her Majesty's Government to accept his resignation; he would take all the steamers and stores up to the Equatorial and Bahr-el-Ghazal Provinces, and consider those provinces as under the King of the Belgians. Day by day, almost hour by hour, telegrams were flashed to the Agency in Cairo, insisting on the policy of "smashing the Mahdi"; telegrams, in many cases, contradictory of one another, charged with remonstrance, or bitter with jest and gibe; but one and all of them showing that General Gordon's mission had ceased to be regarded by him as a mission primarily of evacuation, and that he was now entirely opposed to withdrawal.

Within five weeks of his arrival at Khartum, shortly after the 22nd of March, when, as the result of an interchange of letters with Muhammad Ahmed, he had been invited to recognize the Mahdi, and to turn Muhammadan, General Gordon definitely decided to remain. This decision once taken, and approved by his local supporters, "he could not leave Khartum," as he expressed it, "if he would, nor would he if he

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could." From the hour when this resolution was adopted he no longer professed to entertain any intention of withdrawing the garrisons. His natural combativeness was roused ; while to find a self-nominated ruler in the Soudan who not only set him at defiance, but invited him to embrace Islam, was to stir within him to the utmost the most powerful influences that dominated his character.

✓ In support of these considerations, the difficulties of old Soudanese friends in the more distant garrisons and around him, their trust in his military skill, their personal confidence in his resources, and the knowledge that, were he to withdraw, such as did not accompany him could only escape death by making terms with the Mahdi, pleaded powerfully to his generous and self-sacrificing nature. His boundless courage, his trust in God, possibly confidence in his influence in England, and inability to judge of many matters which must have great weight there, may have closed his eyes to the probabilities of failure, and to the consequences which must ensue therefrom. They may have blinded him also to the responsibility of exposing the thousands who followed him to the risk of massacre and imprisonment, or to indignities worse than death. Be this as it may, it is clear that, after the 22nd of March, one purpose only dominated him, to which all other aims were subordinated, the purpose of combating the power of the Mahdi, by any force available ; and by appealing for assistance therein, not only to his own countrymen, but to every part of the habitable globe whence he could obtain men, and money wherewith to pay them.

Meanwhile, the Dervishes, however slowly they might be taking up the challenge, were not the less determined to accept it. Gradually but irresistibly they were closing



round Khartum. On the 11th of March, three weeks after his arrival in Khartum, General Gordon wired that they were at four days' distance on the Blue Nile. General Gordon, himself, though he never for one moment quailed before them, nor would have quailed had they been a thousandfold more in number, seems to have recognized that their arrival would be the beginning of the end. For on the same day, another telegram, calm in its tone of retrospection, but in its terms almost valedictory, was despatched to the Agency—one almost wishes it had, indeed, been the last, so temperate and so touching are its words:—"I would like to express to you and Her Majesty's Government my sincere thanks for the support you have both afforded me since I took up this mission, and to acknowledge that you have both given me every assistance I could have expected. It is not in our hands to command success. I say the same for the Khedive and Egyptian Ministers." There is no use in continuing the recital. We shall have to return to it; but enough has been said to trace from authentic sources the fatal current of events. All the world knows the sequel, and how General Gordon, as he had anticipated, was caught in Khartum.

There can be little doubt that both the British Government and their envoy overestimated the influence which the latter could exercise in the changed conditions of the Soudan. Gordon Pasha, as the representative of Ismail Pasha, at the zenith of that Khedive's power, and with slave-dealers only to contend against, was one man; but he was another General Gordon altogether as the emissary of Tewfik Pasha—Tewfik the protégé of Christian England, the prisoner only yesterday of his own rebellious Egyptian army—and with Muhammad Ahmed El Mahdi as adversary. Gordon Pasha, in the days



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when he was Governor-General, by his energy, his ubiquity, his matchless courage, his lofty single-mindedness, his large generosity, and by the absolute authority with which he was endowed, had been a name of terror to evildoers. But General Gordon, shut up in Khartum, authority wrenched from him, assistance from Egypt unavailable to him, and with the Dervishes gathering around him, was not to be regarded as of great account. The French Consul, M. Marquet, returning from Khartum to Cairo, spoke to Sir Evelyn Baring on February 10th in very friendly terms of General Gordon, but he did not believe that he would be able to accomplish the object of his mission. He considered that General Gordon had no longer any influence in the Soudan. Sir Evelyn Baring had realized the truth of this, when on April 14th he wrote that he thought that there could be now no doubt that the extent of General Gordon's personal influence in the Soudan was overrated, both by himself and by public opinion in England.

The secret of the whole misadventure lay in the fact that, till the Dervish forces arrived before Khartum, no one concerned seemed able to realize that the country had passed over to the Mahdi. When, in his Memorandum of January 22nd, General Gordon, while apportioning on paper the Soudan among its former Sultans, proposed that "the Mahdi should be altogether left out of the calculation," he gave evidence of his misapprehension of the position. When the Egyptian and British Governments agreed that, after evacuation had been effected, a scheme of settled administration might be devised for the Soudan, from which all consideration of the Mahdi could be omitted, they showed that they shared their adviser's misconception. The Cabinet, by ignoring the Mahdi when considering the future of the Soudan, repeated the

blunder, *mutatis mutandis*, which it had already made in proposing to omit the Soudan from consideration when restoring order in Egypt. When General Gordon asked for Zebehr Pasha and a hundred thousand pounds, he indicated a belief that with the help of the former slave-dealer he could seduce the Dervishes from their allegiance by offering a bait to their cupidity. But such an appeal, addressed to fervent fanatics, was not likely to prove successful. The new power in the Soudan was inspired and sustained by forces very different from those which had animated the Arabs in the old slave-dealer hunting days. Yet even as late as the middle of April he persisted in describing the revolution as a trumpery affair, which five hundred men could dispose of. It may be urged that had Zebehr Pasha been sent to him, as both he and Sir Evelyn Baring wished, the object of his mission might have been accomplished; that to impose on him a duty, and to refuse him the agency which he required in the execution of that duty, was opposed to reason and to justice. But the prime duty entrusted to him was to evacuate; the setting-up of a new Government was secondary, subordinate, and contingent on his being able to find in the Soudan the necessary men and means. What, moreover, are the probabilities that Zebehr, had he been sent, would have succeeded in "smashing the Mahdi"? What had Zebehr Pasha, the slave-dealer, to oppose to the tremendous spirit which Muhammad Ahmed, the accepted Mahdi, had aroused? What were one hundred thousand pounds compared with an earthly kingdom and a heavenly Paradise? General Gordon telegraphed that the Mahdi's power was that of a Pope; but Zebehr's would be that of a Sultan. Very possibly; but there are times in the history of mankind when temporal is eclipsed by spiritual authority; when the latter can rally to its side

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the very forces on which the temporal power most relies. One hundred thousand pounds would only have made Zebehr one hundred thousand times a richer spoil to the Dervishes. The fact that he had been sent from Cairo would have militated against him, especially at a time when the "Turk" was a hissing and an abomination in the entire Soudan. The Equatorial Provinces and Darfur, where he was best known, were in his adversaries' hands; and, in the Soudan, he had no base to work from. Ten years in Cairo had probably dulled the edge of his scimitar. He was, finally, the last man in the world to sacrifice himself or his fortunes in the interests of Egypt; or to risk his neck in a forlorn hope of wresting the Soudan from the Dervishes in order that, at some future day, he might possibly be called upon to restore it to the Khedive.

The one strong argument in favour of sending Zebehr to the Soudan was that therein lay the only chance of getting General Gordon out of it. But between him and Zebehr was the blood of Suliman, the slave-dealer's son; and Lord Granville was insistent that on no account should General Gordon be put within the power of the Pasha. There had passed between them a terrible scene in Cairo, in January, 1884, in the presence of Sir Evelyn Baring, Sir Evelyn Wood, and Nubar Pasha. An abridged, but a seemingly *verbatim*, record of this meeting survives in the pages of a Blue Book, illumining them with flashes of fierce wrath, vivid with outbursts of Zebehr's savage re- crimination, and pathetic in its evidence of General Gordon's self-restraint, and his patient efforts to appease his antagonist.

But if on General Gordon falls the responsibility of misleading the British Government as to the situation in the Soudan, and if their overestimate of his influence may



be traced in great measure to his confidence in his ability to quell the revolt, the Cabinet cannot escape censure for their selection of so unsuitable an envoy. With all his splendid qualities, General Gordon was the most unfit selection conceivable for a mission of which retreat was to be the leading feature, and in the course of which the sacrifice of some of those who had remained loyal to him and to Egypt might prove inevitable. To send him, not to achieve fresh success, but to withdraw from the scenes of former triumphs, and possibly to turn his back on friends who, in humbler spheres, had shared them, was to impose on him a task for which by character, as by past achievement, he was eminently and absolutely unsuited. If evacuation was inevitable, General Gordon was not the man to be entrusted with it. Nor was he the least likely to prove himself a docile agent. His peculiarities were no secret. He was not made, as he wrote in his journal, to obey. "I own to having been very insubordinate to Her Majesty's Government and its officials. But it is my nature, and I cannot help it. I know, if I was chief, I would never employ *myself*, for I am *incorrigible*." (The italics are his own.) Directly guided, as he believed himself to be, by the finger of an ever-present Providence, his impulsive and emotional nature was beyond human control, or comprehension. Years of solitary communings in the African deserts, long days and nights of exhaustion and fatigue, fevers, privations, wrestlings in prayer and spiritual strivings, had worked their inevitable effect on the texture, both of mind and body. Nor, in truth, was General Gordon indispensable. Colonel Stewart had been at hand, and in Colonel Stewart were combined the qualities needed for the enterprise. But while few knew even of the existence of Colonel Stewart, Chinese Gordon and Gordon Pasha of the Soudan were names familiar in men's mouths as house-



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hold words. It is possible that another might have succeeded, even in so delicate and doubtful a mission. It was foreseen by at least some who personally knew him, and who were not blinded by attachment, or misled by admiration, that General Gordon would fail.

## CHAPTER V

### SUAKIN—REORGANIZATION IN EGYPT

Despatch of Osman Digna by the Mahdi to Suakin—Defeat and massacre of the Egyptians under General Baker at El Teb—Position in the Soudan at the close of February, 1884—Dissension and difficulties in Cairo—Formation and growth of Egyptian Irrigation Department—Tobacco Convention with Greece—Commercial Convention with other Powers.

WHILE General Gordon was at Abu Hamed on his way to Berber, there occurred in the neighbourhood of Suakin the crushing disaster of El Teb. It introduced to the world a name which during the next few years was to achieve no little notoriety. In the latter part of 1883, Osman Digna had been sent to the Eastern Soudan with a proclamation setting forth the Mahdi's claims, and calling upon the tribes to enter on a holy war.

"I am a light from God, and the Prophet has confirmed me as Mahdi. . . . On receiving my Proclamation, leave the Turks at once. Do not hesitate to leave your property and children behind you ; leave them and come even unto the nearest village, and fight against the Turks with all your strength. . . . The present time will now prove whether you are truly God's people. This you will be, if you obey the orders of the Mahdi. But, if you disobey them, you must expect nothing but the sword, and your fate will be that of all those who have disobeyed us."

The hint was significant ; and Osman Digna was not the man to hesitate to put it into execution. Three hundred years had elapsed since his ancestors had left

Constantinople. Osman Digna, by mixed descent, had become a Hadendowa; and, with his brother, had traded in slaves, ostrich feathers, ivory, and such-like approved articles of local commerce. But owing to the Anglo-Egyptian Slave Conventions, and to the presence in the Soudan of Gordon Pasha, the times were out of joint. Trade, especially the slave trade, was dull, and showed growing risk and decreasing profit; and finding that there was much consensus of opinion in the Soudan on this point, Osman Digna, at the invitation of the Mahdi, adopted the calling of Zealot and Apostle. It was better suited than slave traffic to the humour of the times; and hastening, in the service of his master, to revive the true religion in the Eastern Soudan, he was raised to the rank of Amir. Provided with the above Proclamation, the missionary to the Hadendowas set his face eastward, where he arrived about the middle of 1883. There were Egyptian garrisons at Suakin, Tokar, and Sinkat; and, further off, at Kassala. Sending his brother to convince the men of Kassala, Osman Digna remained to gather in the fruits of his preaching at the other garrisons. His efforts seemed so likely to be successful, and he carried into effect with such entire efficiency the mandate and methods of his master, that towards the close of November, 1883, Baker Pasha, the chief of the Egyptian Constabulary, was desired by the Egyptian Government to confront him. Baker Pasha took with him from Cairo 2000 infantry, 520 cavalry, and 100 volunteers, mainly from the European officers and sub-officers of police. The infantry were mostly men of the old half-drilled, ill-disciplined armed Constabulary of pre-intervention times. They had been then known as Mustahfazin, and had earned for themselves an evil reputation in 1882 on the occasion of the Alexandrian riots. Baker Pasha aimed first at relieving

Tokar. Embarking at Suakin with further forces, on February 1st, he landed in the neighbourhood of Trinkitat, and leaving 300 men at a fort three miles from his landing-place, he advanced with 3746 men on February 4th towards Tokar. Within a few minutes of meeting the rush from brush and scrubwood of the enemy's spearmen, in number barely 1,200, the Egyptian forces, panic-stricken, were annihilated. Of a force numbering 3746, 2373 were killed. Eleven Europeans, mostly volunteers, were among the slain ; of these let there be remembered the gallant-hearted Morice Bey, chief of the Egyptian Coastguard, who gave his life in defence of the treasure-chest entrusted to him. General Baker returned with the residue of his force to Suakin. Sinkat fell ; and its garrison, while attempting to cut its way through the Dervishes, was totally destroyed on February 9th. Tokar surrendered on the 23rd of the same month.

By the close of February, 1884, the situation in the Soudan had become well-nigh desperate. So far from lending himself to be smashed, the Mahdi and his lieutenants were rapidly gathering the whole country within their grasp. On the Nile the population were in a ferment, from Dongola to Wadelai, near the Equator. Although Khartum and Berber were still held in the name of the Khedive, there were no troops to reinforce them, or to make head against the hosts who were gathering round them. The entire Eastern Soudan, excepting Suakin, Kassala, Senhit, and two or three other smaller towns, was in the hands of the Dervishes. The Egyptian garrisons in the south and south-east, Sennaar, Gedaref, and others, were cut off from all communication ; their fall was a question of time. Truly, the "trumpery rebellion" which five hundred men might stamp out had already attained colossal proportions.



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Meanwhile, in Egypt matters had not been proceeding pleasantly. Pressure came from public opinion in England, and impatience was expressed in the London Press at what was deemed the obstructiveness of the native Egyptian. This found an echo in Cairo, where the Agent had been temporarily replaced, during his mission to London, by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Edwin Egerton. Released for the time being from Sir Evelyn Baring's control, some of the high English officials who had been brought into Egypt to turn water into wine, and to gather grapes from thistles, goaded by the criticisms of their countrymen at home, seemed more anxious to end than to mend. Sudden reforms, all the world over, spell administrative confusion. If changes are to be introduced beneficially, intimate knowledge is required of the nature and history of the institutions of a country and of the characteristics of its people. Violent remedies have violent endings. The existing mechanism of administration must be preserved, at least for a time, so far as it is not organically inconsistent with reform. Much that is objectionable must be for a while—possibly for a long while—borne with; the efforts of the reformer must be centred on the most mischievous elements of misrule; time and opportunity must be looked to, for more general and definite advance. Again, the success of the reformer will depend on the nature of the material before him. The more inert and simple the structure to be worked upon, the more rapid will be success; the greater the complexity and the more sensitive the nature of an organism, the more difficult will it be to deal with. Given, for example, sufficient funds, the four walls of a jail, and complete control over its inmates, it is no very difficult task to enforce discipline, labour, sanitation, and to provide wholesome food. Take, again, a more complicated, but still comparatively a simple problem—irriga-

tion. Employ experts vested with authority and supplied with means, and we may reasonably rely on a fair rate of progress. Disputes as to water rights and vested interests will arise, and will prove embarrassing enough; but the great business of construction, supply, distribution, and drainage is independent of religious prejudice or of native character. But in proportion as reform depends for its success on the manipulation of man, on the suitability of codes, on moral and ethnical as opposed to merely material elements, the reformer's difficulties are enormously increased. Then, as Sir Evelyn Baring somewhere plaintively put it, one of the main obstacles to the introduction of any reforms in Egypt was the great difficulty at that time of finding suitable agents to carry them into effect. There was no Civil Service, subordinate or otherwise. The cour-bash had been banned by Lord Dufferin. That potent instrument of discipline might no longer be used, and an effective substitute had not been as yet found. Rules of procedure, orders, and laws, however excellent, need trained intelligence to administer them, but all this was wanting. Again, except for irrigation, there were no adequate funds, and without funds the most ardent reformer is powerless. In a word, all that could be usefully done at that period was to make acquaintance with the habits and circumstances of the people, to learn their language, to study their likes and dislikes, to gain their confidence, and to search for and pursue the line of least resistance. Unfortunately, in compliance with pressure from public opinion in Great Britain, more was attempted, especially in directions where resistance was sure to be greatest. The result was that much of what was then commenced had at a later day to be undone. Personal differences brought about unseemly controversies, which exposed British officials to scornful foreign comment. Their names were

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held up to Egyptian ridicule, and their influence necessarily suffered.

It is useless now to dwell on the unfruitful quarrels of those bygone days. But it is infinitely to be regretted that excellent men, devoted to duty, and singularly capable in their own spheres of action, should have been at times nominated to posts unsuited to their genius and characteristics. The responsibility for this failure lay mainly on those who selected them. On such occasions, men are too often chosen, not because they have proved their fitness for the place they may be sent to occupy, but because, in the game of politics, it is desired to relieve them of offices in which they are no longer needed. Except possibly where the highest posts are concerned, no method of selection for office abroad is more frequently unfortunate in its results than that of leaving the choice to Ministers and to their advisers. In the conflict with party convenience or private pressure, public interests are too often lost sight of. Few who are intimate with the course of administration in our dependencies have not witnessed the mischief which may thus arise.

Yet, trifling as were interludes such as these, one cannot, in glancing at them, but feel momentary relief from the ever-growing horror of the crisis under whose shadow they occurred. Knowing what is impending, one is grateful for the introduction of a lighter element. The tragic development of events at the time so hurries us on that if we were not indulged with a brief glimpse of human weakness, and a motive for mirth, the gloom would be overpowering. The imminent triumph of the false prophet; the murders of Colonel Stewart and Mr. Power; that solitary figure daily pacing the roof of the palace at Khartum in fruitless search of a relieving column; the bloody head in the napkin; the massacre



of thousands at Khartum—all this, as the plot unfolds itself, demands set-off and relief. We find it, among other matter, in the episodes of some among the early Egyptian reformers. Their ignorance, their self-confidence, their fiery indignation, the want of funds which must have made their efforts fruitless, had they reached the point of action—all is excellent in its irony. What the grave-digger is in "Hamlet," or the knocking at the porter's gate in "Macbeth," these incidents supply in the great Egyptian tragedy. They furnish the touch of nature, the *humani aliquid*, the simple, intelligible, familiar incident of every one's daily experience. They drop us down from heights of tense feeling to the flat foolishness of our fellow-men. But let us not blame those who, in truth, were victims to their position. Urged to activity by impatient voices from their own country, without funds, without reliable subordinates, with no knowledge of the language or of the land, with no counsellor but zeal, and no guide but inexperience, what could they have been expected to effect?

In the matter of irrigation, reform went more smoothly. While not deducting one jot or one tittle from the honour due to Colonel Scott Moncreiff and his associates, it may again be pointed out that it is easier to lay out or to correct a system of canalization than to deal with the spirits of froward men, and with intricacies of law or procedure. Silt is bad, and scouring is abominable; but to entrust modern systems of civil administration to the handling of venal Arabs, or to the indifferent Turk, is perilous beyond power of silt or scour. A good beginning was made in the selection of Colonel Scott Moncreiff, of the Royal Engineers, a man of phenomenal temper and persistency. He arrived in Cairo in May, 1883, as Inspector-General of Irrigation; and on January 22nd,



1884, he was made Under-Secretary in the Public Works Department, in lieu of a French official, Rousseau Pasha, who retired after long and distinguished service. To Colonel Scott Moncrieff were added in December, 1883, Major Ross, R.E., and Mr. Willcocks; and in April, 1884, Captain Brown, R.E., and Mr. Foster. This was the nucleus from which there gradually grew the Irrigation Department of Egypt, which has done as great service for Egypt as has its parent department for India. But the beginnings were small. The first year was necessarily one of experiment. Colonel Scott Moncrieff and his assistants had to study a new country and a new language. Their Indian training helped them to recognize natural conditions in Egypt very similar to those of Northern India. It was not difficult to point out the defects in the Egyptian irrigation system, or to indicate the true line of reform; but in other respects there were great obstacles. Egypt was no *tabula rasa* on which to lay down the most perfect canal system, but a country whose very life depended on a fully developed but extremely bad system. It was necessary to introduce reforms without stopping the existing machinery for a day. When a canal had to be closed, it was found necessary to have another canal open at once to take its place. In all this it had been found most difficult, perhaps impossible, to avoid injuring some private interest. Numerous vested rights had to be arranged for. Accurate statistics did not exist. The *corvée* was new to the Indian officers; and they found it as a system full of defects, and bound before long to disappear. The Egyptian engineers through whom they had to work were neither expert nor energetic. Money, though not wanting, was not as yet available for costly improvements. The problem to be solved was how to introduce a better system of water regulation with the

means available, so as to increase and assure the area of irrigation, how to improve the condition of great tracts of land soured and water-logged, and how to keep the canals and Nile embankments in repair with the least employment of forced labour.

All five men, if not literally the pick of the basket, were at least taken from a picked basket of choice growth. The staff was fortunate, too, in its chief, who was endowed with precisely the qualities which were wanting in some of his contemporaries in Egypt. The term "soft invincibility," applied by Thomas Carlyle to his wife, best describes the chief characteristic of Colonel Scott Moncrieff. Amiable persistency, imperturbable temper, untiring energy, enthusiasm lit and sustained by the flame of duty—when, and in what land have these qualities not prevailed, when combined with needful knowledge? In Egypt they were bound to carry everything before them; and supported as they were by a growing supply of funds, they go far to explain the uniform success of the Irrigation Department on the Nile, which has culminated in the dam at Assouan and in Sir William Garstin's projects for irrigation enterprise in the Soudan.

The country was divided into five parts, four being distributed among the Anglo-Indians, the fifth (comprising the two most southern provinces) being left under an Egyptian who had been formerly an Inspector. The Nile was favourable for commencement. At the Low Nile there were 25 centimetres more water in the river at Assouan than the average, at the High Nile the water was lower than it had been for seven years; a condition bad for cultivation, but rendering protection against inundation very easy. The chief success of the year was the attempt on the barrage, or monster weir across the Nile at the apex of the Delta some twelve miles north of Cairo. It had

been finished by Mougél Bey, a Frenchman, twenty years before, and was intended to hold up the water of the Low Nile as much as 4.5 metres, diverting it into a great network of canals. But owing to a serious accident in 1867 all confidence in the work had ceased, and as lately as April, 1883, an official report of the Public Works Ministry at Cairo had pronounced the barrage valueless, except to regulate the flow in the two branches of the river. Shortly before Colonel Scott Moncrieff's arrival it had been proposed to adopt an extensive system of costly pumping to supply the cotton crops of the Delta, and to give up all further thought of raising the water surface by the barrage. Mr. Willcocks set to work to see what could be done with the barrage, and building (like others of his countrymen in Egypt) upon French foundations, he succeeded in holding up 2.20 metres of water on the Rosetta, and 0.95 on the Damietta barrage. This gave a command of water about one metre more than the average, which enormously increased the discharge of the Great Central Canal, or Rayah Menoufieh, of the neglected Western Canal, or Rayah Behera, and of the three great canals of Kalubiyeh, viz. Ismailieh, Sharkawiyeh, and Bassusiyeh. This was effected at a cost of £E.25,611; and not only gave water abundantly to all, but delivered the water at a higher level, so that many were able to water their fields without the use of pumps or water-wheels. In the neighbourhood of the sea-level, owing to defective drainage, when the water should have been flowing off the fields, carrying with it all the noxious salts, there was no empty channel to receive it. It remained till the salts had been absorbed again in the fields, which, instead of being ready for the wheat sowings of December, were apt to be so damp as to rot the seed. The remedy was to draw from the Nile during floods only the water required for the crops, and no more; to keep lines of



irrigation distinct from lines of drainage; to see that irrigation was only practised from the former, and to prevent any species of obstruction in the latter. But so defective was the canal system in Lower Egypt at that time that it was only after years of patient labour that any material improvement could be effected. "Except on the Ibrahiyeh Canal, the irrigation of Upper Egypt is entirely on the old basin system," wrote Colonel Scott Moncrieff (whose narrative has furnished the text of these remarks). "This was new to us English officers, and it was better to study it than to try and meddle with it." It would have been well if all English officers had approached their work in this spirit; and we may turn to other matters, and leave the irrigation officers studying their business, in the full confidence that they will not "try to meddle" before they have mastered their subject.

On March 3rd, 1884, the Government of Egypt, in the exercise of its right to make commercial conventions with foreign Powers, concluded a treaty between Egypt and Greece, providing among other matters for the regulation of the tobacco trade. Until this treaty came into force, Greek tobacco was excluded from Egypt; the only tobacco admitted being Turkish, which paid a duty of fifteen piastres per oke,<sup>1</sup> viz. ten piastres export from Turkey and five piastres import in Egypt. Hence a great contraband trade grew up, with which the Egyptian authorities, tied down as they were by the capitulations, were entirely unable to cope. Commercial houses of good name joined in it, and the smugglers, encouraged by their support and by the great profits, did not shrink from open battle, if necessary, with the coastguard.

The existing prohibition against the import of Greek tobacco was cancelled, and a duty of five piastres, similar

<sup>1</sup> 1 oke =  $2\frac{3}{4}$  lb. ; 1 piastre =  $2\frac{1}{2}$  d.



to that paid on entry by Turkish tobacco, was imposed. Receipts rose rapidly. Little by little contraband ceased, and this new departure in the policy of dealing with tobacco led ultimately to further changes, to be noticed in due course, which have made the duty on tobacco one of the most important items of Egyptian Treasury receipts. In arranging this important convention with Greece, Mr. Vincent was greatly aided by the late Mr. Caillard, Director-General of Customs, who was for many years one of the most prominent among the little group of English officers employed under the Egyptian Government. With Mr. Caillard's assistance, valuable conventions were also made with some of the European Governments, and with the United States, having for their object the furnishing of greater facilities to the Customs authorities in enforcing against their several subjects the Egyptian Customs Regulations.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LONDON CONFERENCE

Economies Committee appointed in Cairo—Suppression of Council of State—Necessity of revising the Law of Liquidation of 1880—Attitude and attributes of the Caisse—Circular of Lord Granville to the Powers, with the view of modifying the Law of Liquidation—Proposals of the British Cabinet—Committee of British experts assembled in London to report on the Egyptian financial situation—Report of the Committee—Sketch of the provisions of the Law of Liquidation—Meeting of International Conference in London—French opposition and counter proposals—Conference separates without result.

IT has been mentioned that in the last days of 1883, within two months of his return to Egypt, Sir Evelyn Baring had drawn the attention of the Government to the growth of expenditure as shown in the Estimates of 1884. A week later, a Committee was appointed with a view of effecting, if possible, a reduction of not less than £E.350,000 in the Estimates. This Committee, of which the Egyptian Minister of Finance was President, was composed of Mr. Vincent, the Financial Adviser, Mr. (now Sir Gerald) Fitzgerald, Accountant-General, Blum Pasha, Under-Secretary of Finance, and M. Mazuc, a French official. The Committee took permanent form, and was of much use in subsequent years in checking and controlling the demands of hungry departments. Among other economies, the Council of State, which formed part of the Institutions of 1883, was suspended; and so effectively that, like certain other suspended bodies, it never recovered animation. The Council cost £10,000

annually, and Nubar Pasha contended that its work would be more efficiently performed by a single draughtsman, aided by a small staff of clerks. But all this, excellent though it might be, was not the way in which financial collapse could be averted. The gulf was too deep and yawning to be filled up by many Councils of State. It was evident that unless the British Government took on itself the responsibility of reviewing the international obligations by which Egypt had been bound under the Law of Liquidation since 1880, the country would again fall into bankruptcy, and a way would be opened to the irruption of the Powers, guided and preceded by France.

The execution of much of the Law of Liquidation had been committed to the care of an international Cerberus, already mentioned, whose origin and functions now need further explanation. It had taken a very conspicuous part in the destruction of Ismail Pasha, though it was to Ismail that it owed existence. To it also would be confided the watch and ward over the working of any international convention by which the Law of Liquidation might be modified or superseded. The habitat of this international Cerberus was known as the *Caisse de la Dette Publique*, the Public Debt Treasury; and the four heads of the Beast were the English, French, Austrian, and Italian Commissioners. The "*Caisse*" (as it is called in Egypt) had been created by Ismail Pasha on May 2nd, 1876, as a guarantee to his European creditors. It consisted in 1876 of four Commissioners and a Secretary. The first Commissioners nominated by the Khedive, with the consent of their respective Governments, were, M. de Blignières for France, Herr von Kremer for Austro-Hungary, and M. Baravelli for Italy. In the course of 1877 Sir Evelyn (then Captain) Baring joined them; but as the British Government declined to nominate, Captain Baring

was the delegate of British creditors in conclave. All were men of experience and capacity; the French and the British Commissioners were possessed of exceptional financial ability. The main business of the Caisse was to receive from duly qualified authorities, and to disburse in the appointed quarters, all sums required for the service of the Funded Debt. The powers conferred upon them by successive Khedivial decrees were formidable. All revenues assigned to the service of the Funded Debt were to be paid by the officials charged with collection directly into the Caisse coffers, and not through the State Treasury. The receipt of the Commissioners for such sums was alone valid. The Caisse could call on the Minister of Finance to make good deficiencies in the sums available for the service of the Debt, when the periodical payments of interest and the requirements for Sinking Fund fell due. They could cite the Government before the Mixed Tribunals, in the event of any infraction of the decrees which they were appointed to watch over. No taxes could be reduced without the consent of the Caisse, so far as the revenues assigned to the Debt were concerned. No loan could be raised by the Egyptian Government without their consent. They were nominated by the Khedive, but at the instance of their several Governments. Each Commissioner received a salary of £3000 per annum, and held office for five years from the period of taking charge. An ample staff was allowed, for the accounts were voluminous and complicated. The decisions of the Caisse were taken by majority; but any single member could institute a suit, of his own initiative, before the Mixed Tribunals. Finally, the Commissioners were available for any purpose connected with the Debt which their position might seem to indicate.

The first act of the Caisse, after its institution, had been



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to poke its nose into the pockets of Ismail Pasha, and taking prominent part in the Commission of Inquiry, referred to at p. 22, it had sniffed out and dragged into daylight a thousand abuses and malpractices. It lay, like the watchdog it was, day and night at the threshold of its charge; and when Ismail Pasha had no more provender to supply—when his coffers were empty, and its claims unsatisfied—it assisted in tearing him to pieces. Tewfik it respected, since, although he too was empty-handed, others, whose voices it obeyed, could vouch for him. So it basked for a brief hour in the sunshine of its salary, and lay blinking in its appointed corner. There the Powers, intent on the Law of Liquidation, found it. The members of the Caisse took a prominent share in the Commission which drew up that law; and when the Khedivial decree had been issued, promulgating the law with international sanction, the Caisse, under its provisions, became a part, and a very important part, of the international machinery which was required to give effect to it. Presently came Arábi and his greedy pack, before whom, snapping and snarling, Cerberus retreated. Others dealt with Arábi, and in due course the Caisse resumed its guard. From time to time its members were changed; but, whoever the Commissioners for the time might be, the functions of the Caisse remained unmodified and its watchfulness continued unabated.

On April 19th, 1884, Lord Granville circulated to the Powers proposals for a conference in which he called their attention to the effect of the war of 1882 upon the situation as arranged for by the Law of Liquidation. The grounds of his appeal were summarized under the following three heads:—

1. The destruction of property at Alexandria, and the awards of the International Commission for compensation

of the sufferers : say, four and a half millions of pounds sterling.

2. The cost of the protracted endeavour of Egypt to hold the Soudan ; the attempt made to suppress the insurrection in that region ; the disaster which befell the Egyptian forces in October, 1883, and the measures which it had been necessary to take in view of the dangers thus created. The expenditure under this head, incurred or to be incurred, might be put at not less than one and a half million pounds sterling.

3. The excess for the past three years of the current administrative charges over the available revenue of the country ; and the necessity of considerable expenditure on works and irrigation.

Lord Granville subsequently estimated that £8,000,000 would be required in the form of a new loan to meet the floating debt accumulated since the Law of Liquidation, as well as the cost of the Alexandria indemnities. A sum of £4,130,000 was the cost of Arábi's army to Egypt for a single day's work in Alexandria. The total indemnities adjudged had amounted to that sum ; but £3,660,000 only remained to be liquidated, claims of or under £200 having been paid off to the amount of £E.470,000 in order to relieve small tradesmen, or individuals whose necessities were too urgent to admit of delay.

A Commission, of which Sir Evelyn Baring was president, was at the same time appointed in London to consider the financial condition of Egypt. Sir Evelyn had been called over from Cairo to assist and advise the British Government in combating French opposition over the financial crisis. The Commission presented its report on June 28th, 1884, after minutely and laboriously examining and analysing every head of receipt and expenditure in the current and in the four preceding years. Taking 1880

as their starting-point, the increase to the indebtedness of Egypt, since the passing of the Law of Liquidation, and including the impending deficit of 1884, was estimated by them at £8,000,000. They calculated that a further sum of £1,000,000 would be needed for irrigation, but they assumed that, after certain deductions and adjustments, a net sum of £8,000,000 would be sufficient in the form, say, of a loan at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, inclusive of Sinking Fund. The annual charge on the Egyptian Government would be £360,000. The proposed loan might be contributed, or at least guaranteed, by the British Government. The Commission further framed a normal balance sheet based on a review of annual receipts and expenditure since 1880, in which they calculated the net revenue of Egypt at £E.8,855,000; and the expenditure, including the service of the Debt, the interest and Sinking Fund of the new loan, and the cost of the Army of Occupation, at a total of £E.9,231,000; thus leaving a normal deficit of £E.376,000. The task, therefore, before Lord Granville and his colleagues was to obtain the consent of the Powers to a loan to Egypt of £8,000,000, and to such changes in the limits of the amounts severally assigned to payments on account of the Debt, and for the needs of the administration by the Law of Liquidation as would enable the Egyptian Government, with a reasonable exercise of prudence, to balance its annual revenue and expenditure. The Committee wished, however, besides making good the normal deficit of £E.376,000, to arrange for an estimated surplus of normal revenue over normal expenditure of £E.150,000; in other words, to modify the position, as created by the Law of Liquidation, to the extent of about half a million annually in favour of the Egyptian Government. They recorded, in concluding their report, an opinion that measures should be devised to exercise such a check on the Egyptian Government as would for the future effec-



tively restrain it from exceeding the limits assigned to its expenditure. This suggestion, in the form in which it was ultimately enforced, was destined to give the Agent and the Financial Adviser many a bad half-hour.

At the risk of being tedious, it will be necessary, to enable the reader who wishes to follow this narrative, to set forth briefly the provisions of the Law of Liquidation, and of the international agreement which ultimately superseded much of it. The difficulties of Egypt during the remaining years of the century would be otherwise unintelligible. Happily, since 1904, the situation created by the Law of Liquidation, and by the subsequent Agreement of 1885, is a tale of the past. By the recent Anglo-French Convention the hands of the Egyptian Government have been definitely loosed, and it has come under a new dispensation. The old law, with the memory of the thunderings and lightnings which preceded its delivery, with its commandments, comminations, and penalties, with the Commissioners of the Caisse, its priests of Levi, has been replaced by a covenant of grace. In lieu of vexatious ordinances, exact observance of ceremonial, and appointed days, Egypt, so long as she pays the interest and Sinking Fund of her debts, and balances revenue and expenditure, may now, with little exception, manage her finances in her own way; may encash all her own revenues; and may seek salvation by punctual and by pious discharge of plain duties. But it is necessary to enter into some explanations of those "old, unhappy, far-off things," because in their day they lay at the root of most of the problems which perplexed Egypt. Though they no longer have any influence on affairs, it would be impossible, without some understanding of them, to follow the course of events in the following pages, still more to appreciate the obstacles which our countrymen were called upon to surmount.



The requirements of the Egyptian State Administration had been estimated in the Law of Liquidation at £E.4,897,888 annually; and, after making, as they believed, provision sufficient to meet that charge, the framers of the Law had devoted the balance of the available revenues of the country, with some not very important reserves, to furnishing the interest and Sinking Fund of the Funded Debt. That debt consisted, in 1880, first of £22,587,000, termed the Privileged Debt; secondly, of £57,776,000, in which all and various other pre-existing loans were brought together, and which was known as the Unified Debt. The revenues assigned to payment of interest and Sinking Fund on these two debts were (1) for the service of the Privileged Debt, the State Railway and State Telegraph receipts, and the Port Dues of Alexandria; and (2) for the service of the Unified Debt, the receipts of the Customs Department, and all proceeds of taxation (land revenue or other) in the four provinces of Gharbieh, Menoufieh, Behera, and Siyut, less a repayment to the Government of 7 per cent for expenses of administration. The rest of the revenues of Egypt were left to the State to meet its expenditure.

Independently of the above loans, and of the arrangements regarding them, there were two further loans known respectively as the Daira and the Domains Loans. The security in the first line for these lay in two large groups of landed estates in Lower and in Upper Egypt, which were severally administered by three Commissioners—an Englishman, a Frenchman, and an Egyptian. The Daira was the Khedive's landed estate, which had passed into his hands by various means and at various times, and comprised much of the best sugar lands in Upper Egypt; the Domains consisted of valuable lands in Lower Egypt which had become the property of the members of the

late Khedive's family. All the rights of the Khedive and of his family in these properties had been transferred to their creditors, by whom they were pledged as security for the several loans. The nominal capital of the Daira Loan was £9,386,740, of the Domains Loan £8,500,000.

The charge of the Privileged Debt was a fixed annuity of £1,187,000, which provided 5 per cent interest on its capital, and a Sinking Fund calculated to extinguish the Debt in sixty-one years from 1880 by half-yearly drawings. Should the revenue assigned to the Privileged Debt prove insufficient to meet the annuity, the deficit became a first charge on the revenues assigned to the Unified. The Unified carried interest at 4 per cent, which was guaranteed by the Government in the event of insufficiency in the revenues assigned to it. The Sinking Fund of the Unified, calculated at  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, operated by purchase in the market, and was provided from the surplus of the assigned revenues after they had completed the annuity on the Privileged and the interest on the Unified Stock. In the event of the surplus on the Assigned Revenues being insufficient to meet these charges and to provide a Sinking Fund of £288,000 for the Unified Stock, the Government would be liable, in certain conditions, to make up the deficiency. The revenues not assigned to the service of the Privileged and Unified Debts were at the disposal of the Government for administrative purposes, subject to the following first charges :—

	£
The Tribute to Turkey . . . . .	678,000
Payments to England of interest on Suez Canal shares . . . . .	194,000
Subvention to the Daira Revenue . . . . .	34,000
Annuity for payment of Mukabala <sup>1</sup> claims . . . . .	150,000

<sup>1</sup> In 1871 the Egyptian Government announced that all owners of landed property might, by payment of a capital equal to six times the amount of

The Government share of the common revenues was further responsible for making good any deficiency in the annual interest on the loans raised on the Domains and Daira lands.

In the most favourable circumstances it is very doubtful whether the stringent provisions of the Law of Liquidation would have proved workable. There would, at the best, have been the greatest difficulty for some years after 1880. Though the rate of interest on the Unified Debt had been considerably lowered, the provision for Sinking Fund was too rigid. The margin left to the State to meet inevitable growth of expenditure was insufficient. The Daira and the Domains were constantly in deficit, and proved a heavy annual charge on the State. But circumstances, so far from being favourable, were eminently the reverse. Within a year of the law taking effect disturbances commenced in Egypt, and throughout 1882 and the two succeeding years the budgetary provisions were profoundly disturbed. Revenue fell off and expenditure largely increased. The deficit of three years, 1881-3, was £E.2,656,000, and the estimated deficit of 1884 was £E.512,000. Meanwhile, by the operation of the Sinking Fund, the Public Debt had been reduced by £1,969,000, and the Budget of the Assigned Revenues in 1884 showed an estimated surplus of over £E.400,000 to be applied to the further redemption of the Unified Debt, besides drawings on account of the Privileged Debt. So that while Egypt could not pay its way, and was falling heavily into debt, existing

their land tax, acquire a right to have the tax fixed in perpetuity at a sum equal to one-half the amount heretofore due. Payments, mostly under compulsion, were made on this account of about £E.16,000,000 between 1871 and 1878. Under the Law of Liquidation the sum due from the Egyptian Government to persons who had paid the Mukabala was reduced from £E.16,000,000 to £E.9,500,000, and an annuity of £E.150,000, or about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent on the reduced capital, was granted on the debt for fifty years.



liabilities were being liquidated by abundant excess of revenues.<sup>1</sup>

It was clear that circumstances wholly beyond the power of the British Government, and antecedent to its occupation of Egypt, had brought about the collapse of the Law of Liquidation. Nor was the present Khedivial Government in any way responsible for these circumstances. Revolt and war in Egypt and in the Soudan had defeated the forecasts of 1880. The Powers having assented to the mission of Great Britain to re-establish order, and to lay the lines of future administration in Egypt, could not refuse to give their best consideration to proposals which the British Cabinet might put before them for restoring the country to solvency. On June 28th, 1884, in response to Lord Granville's invitation of April 19th, the Ambassadors of France, Austria, Germany, Italy, Russia, and Turkey met Lord Granville and Mr. Childers (then Chancellor of the Exchequer) in solemn conclave, to discuss the Egyptian Budget in London. Round these planets revolved their satellites, the British Agent in Cairo; M. Barrère, French Consul-General in Egypt; the representatives of the Caisse de la Dette; M. de Blignières, now *functus officio*, as far as Egypt was concerned, but brought over from Paris as an expert to pick holes in British figures; Blum, doubtless with his little scheme, and others. There is no space in this volume for the recital of abortive discussions, for after seven sittings the Conference was dissolved. But, though abortive at the time, the London Conference gave useful data, which served in 1885 as a basis for settlement. Lord Granville presented what his advisers regarded as a normal Budget of estimated receipts and expenditure; and proposed a reduction of the interest on the Funded Debt,

<sup>1</sup> The term £E. denotes pounds Egyptian. An Egyptian pound is equivalent to £1. os. 6d.



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including the Suez Canal Loan, based on an all-round diminution of  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, thus arriving at an economy of £E.511,000 on the annual Debt expenditure, and producing a normal surplus on administrative account of £E.135,000. The British Government was prepared to guarantee a loan of £8,000,000 at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, including interest and Sinking Fund, in order to pay off the floating debt, such loan to take precedence of all other loans on the revenues of Egypt. The Sinking Fund on all other loans was to be suspended. Half of the surplus of one year might be carried to the credit of the year ensuing, the other half would be devoted to the provision of Sinking Funds for the several loans. The charge for the Army of Occupation was not to exceed £300,000 a year. The revenue as estimated by Lord Granville's advisers amounted to £E.8,855,000, the expenditure to £E.9,231,000, calculated on charges as at that time existing. Reduction of £E.511,000 was proposed on loan account, thus leaving a surplus of £E.135,000. The French experts took exception to the estimates presented to the conclave on the ground that receipts, especially land revenue receipts, had been underestimated. They calculated the normal receipts at £E.9,582,000. They contended that the land tax should be retained at its existing rate; that the present rate of interest on the various debts should be maintained; they agreed that the Sinking Fund should be suspended; and they concluded that, with these provisos, the Budget would leave a margin of more than £E.600,000. The question thus turned on the correctness of contending estimates of revenue. The French Ambassador pressed for the provisional adoption of figures prepared by M. de Blignières as a working basis, for two years, after which the Conference could meet again, if necessary. During those two years a thorough inquiry might be made (with

the kind assistance of the Powers) into the incidence of the land revenue. Meanwhile, on none of the loans should interest be lowered, but the several Sinking Funds might be suspended. In lieu of a British Guarantee, an international guarantee to the proposed loan was suggested. The British Government held to its figures, and on August 2nd, 1884, after some sharp passages-at-arms between Lord Granville and certain of the foreign members, the Conference was adjourned *sine die*.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NORTHBROOK MISSION—THE SETTLEMENT

Mission of Lord Northbrook to Egypt—Sinking Fund suspended, by his advice—Action brought by the Caisse against the Egyptian Government—Resumption of Sinking Fund—Arguments for and against Lord Northbrook's action—Addition of German and Russian members to the Commissioners of the Caisse—Settlement of the question as to the salaries of the new Commissioners—Distress and dissatisfaction in Egypt—Incident of the "Bosphore Egyptien."

THE British Cabinet having failed to carry their scheme, Lord Northbrook, a member of the Ministry, was sent to Egypt as High Commissioner, to advise. Arriving in Cairo on the 9th September, he found the situation most critical. In the current month there would be a deficit amounting to £E.178,588. To meet temporary advances from banks due during October and November a further loan of £E.1,574,338 would be required. There would also be the administrative charges of those two months. Lord Northbrook estimated the net total claims to be provided for before the close of November at a little over £E.1,700,000. The first measure that he had to suggest was heroic, and was sure to call forth remonstrance, but it would at least bring grist to the mill. He advised the British Cabinet to support the Egyptian Government in setting aside temporarily the requirements of the Law of Liquidation. He proposed that until the 25th of the ensuing month (October) the Egyptian Government should divert from the Public Debt Treasury into its own coffers so much of the

revenues assigned to the debt as would remain, after leaving funds for the annuity of the Privileged Debt and the interest on the Unified Debt. A sum of £E.230,000 would thus be made available for such urgent needs of the Administration as payment of the Turkish tribute, and the salaries of officials. The British Government accepted the proposal, and on September 18th it was communicated to the Powers concerned and to the Caisse. On the following day the latter presented to the Egyptian Government a formal protest against the violation of the Law of Liquidation; the Powers, a little later, unanimously supported the protest. In order to allay opposition Lord Northbrook promised his colleagues to hasten payment of the indemnities, in which all the foreign colonies in Egypt were in varying degrees interested, and he undertook to present a report on the whole matter by the beginning of November. Nevertheless, on October 5th a writ was obtained in the name of the French, Austrian, and Italian Commissioners of the Caisse, citing the Prime Minister (Nubar Pasha), his Finance Minister, and the heads of the Administrations concerned, to appear before the Mixed Tribunals on the 20th of that month. The British member had dissented from the course adopted by his colleagues. "You are aware," wrote Mr. (afterwards Sir Alonzo) Money, "that public opinion in England thinks more of the country and the Egyptian than of what concerns the bondholders. At a moment when a member of the English Cabinet is in the country occupied in examining into the means of improving the general situation, if we make his task more difficult by putting a spoke in the wheel of the Egyptian Government, public opinion in England and elsewhere will probably not be favourably inclined, either towards the Caisse or to those whom we represent." If, in the impending suit, he argued, the Government were con-



demned, and were not for the moment in a position to refund the sums diverted from the Sinking Fund, execution would be enforced by seizure of Government property. This would of necessity greatly weaken the credit of the Government. But greatly to weaken the credit of the Government, and to bring on a new financial crisis, was to act as if the holders of the debt could prosper, while the country was going from bad to worse. All this, however unanswerable, was beside the point. An international agreement, embodied in a Khedivial decree, which regulated the relations between the Government and the Public Creditor, had been openly violated by the Egyptian Government at the instance of one of the subscribing Powers. If the Caisse were to condone such action, it would have betrayed its trust. Moreover, though this did not form matter of any public declaration, France had got Great Britain into a tight place, and meant to keep her there. She had got John Bull's head into chancery, and her intention was to punish it. If the Egyptian Government were in difficulties, it was for their patron and backer, the British Cabinet, to accommodate them. There were a British Agent and a British Financial Adviser in Cairo; let alone a member of the British Cabinet. Had they nothing else to propose than repudiation? No better example to follow or to set than the example of Ismail Pasha? Payments to the Caisse resumed their regular course on October 14th, and on October 25th Lord Northbrook, having been little more than seven weeks in Egypt, returned to London. He recorded, before leaving, a reply to his critics. His arguments, from his own point of view, were cogent; but they evaded what was the real question at issue, that is, the illegality of his procedure. Lord Northbrook stigmatized the action of the Commissioners as precipitate. Although action purported to have been

taken by three of the four Commissioners, it was matter of common knowledge that the Italian Commissioner was not at the time in Cairo, while the British Commissioner disapproved of the course taken. The Caisse represented the creditors. If its action were persisted in, and proved successful, it must entail the bankruptcy of Egypt. How would that help the creditors? The Caisse knew the object of Lord Northbrook's mission, and might reasonably have awaited his report, with its final proposals, before rushing the Government into Court. In the critically impecunious state in which Lord Northbrook on his arrival had found the Egyptian Treasury, there was no time to consult the Powers. Tribute to the Porte formed a portion of what could be termed the constitution of Egypt, and to have failed in payment of the tribute might have had the gravest consequences. In the recent London Conference the French had themselves accepted the proposal to suspend the Sinking Fund on the several loans, and the other Powers had agreed. Whatever inconvenience might have ensued from adoption of this measure would fall mainly on Egypt, inasmuch as it prolonged the term of its obligations.

However favourably these arguments might have been received by friendly or well-disposed Powers, they fell dead on the ears of the French Cabinet, which was neither well-disposed nor friendly. The Egyptian Government, with the credit of Great Britain behind it, had, in French opinion, other less objectionable sources of relief than the Treasury chest of the Egyptian Public Debt Office, which, in accord with the great European Powers, it had formally and by solemn agreement recognized, barely four years ago, as inviolable. The plain fact remained that international agreements were made to be kept, not broken. Prince Bismarck, who had a quarrel of his own at the time with the British Cabinet, pointed out that the measure threatened

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the validity of treaties in the East, and was dangerous to Great Britain as well as to other Powers. As the delegate of Europe it was more peculiarly the business of Great Britain to observe the sanctity of Egyptian obligations, and in its position of guardian to enforce respect for pledges. The long and the short of the whole matter was that, on October 14th, payments were resumed; that the Egyptian Government, on December 9th, was condemned by the Mixed Tribunals of first instance; that appeal was instituted by the Government; but that before it could be heard the Powers had come to a settlement of the whole field of Egyptian finance, and the controversy fell to the ground.

The Governments of Germany and Russia were so pained and shocked at the illegality and high-handedness of the proceedings of the Egyptian Government that, for greater security, they expressed a desire that their Governments should in future be represented on the Caisse. The number of German subjects in Egypt was estimated in 1882 at 948; Russian subjects (Orientals included) were returned as 533. Egyptian stock was not admitted before 1887 to a quotation at Berlin; in Russia the amount held in 1885 was without doubt infinitesimal. Turkey also asked for a representative on the Caisse, for the greater satisfaction of the public creditor. But Turkey was bowed out of Court. The number of Commissioners, which had hitherto been four, would nevertheless be raised to six; and the charge for their salaries, if maintained at the then existing rates, would be increased from £12,000 to £18,000 per annum. Prince Bismarck, while supporting the proposed increase to the number of the Commissioners, was graciously pleased to add that he did not wish that there should be any additional cost to the Egyptian Government. His



view was that the four Commissioners should squeeze up, to use a colloquialism, and so make room for the addition of two to their number. In other words, his suggestion was, that £12,000 per annum should be divided between six gentlemen, instead of among four. The course of events may be so far anticipated as to add that after the settlement of the Egyptian finances had been effected in the course of 1885, and after infinite correspondence between the Powers as to the proposed reduction of salaries, and in spite of the customary opposition of France to any suggestion calculated to relieve Egyptian revenues, the two additional Commissioners took their seats. But as the Commissioners at that time held each an agreement for a term of five years with the Egyptian Government, and as none of them were in the least disposed to squeeze up, before their term expired, in order to make room for the new-comers, it was arranged that the Egyptian Government should, for the ensuing three years, pay the salaries of each of the new-comers at the rate of £2700 per annum, and that after three years no Commissioner should receive more than £2000 per annum. It was further agreed that, Ministers excepted, no greater salary than £2000 per annum should be paid to any Egyptian official. Egypt was thus compelled, in its time of financial need, to pay to six foreign gentlemen £17,400 per annum for three years, and £12,000 per annum after three years, for doing the work of, at most, two men. The burden was one, moreover, which might have been fairly debited (as at a much later date it was) to the overflowing revenues assigned to the Debt, on behalf of which the Commissioners were entertained, and not added as a burden on the insufficient resources of the State. The limitation of all Egyptian salaries to a maximum of £2000 might prove, as time passed, inconvenient.



In every great drama are to be found minor plots concurrent with the main development. The great lines on which this our Egyptian drama unrolls itself are the struggle of the Mahdi *contra mundum*, and of Egypt against Internationalism. Subordinate to these are plots of lesser interest, but intimately entwined with the development of the main action. Such were the sallies of the Caisse ; such especially was the incident of the "Bosphore Egyptien."

The Saturnian reign which the coming of Lord Dufferin had seemed to bring to Egypt had long since vanished into air. The confidence in British helpfulness and resource which had characterized 1883 had died away during the experience of succeeding years. If the delay in paying the indemnities had greatly inconvenienced even the more opulent Europeans in Alexandria, it had wholly ruined many of the small tradesmen and artisans. The constant affirmations of British Ministers that Her Majesty's troops would be withdrawn at the earliest possible moment were fatal to security and enterprise. The great appreciation of gold, of which the commencement may be traced as far back as 1876, combined with the effects of general overproduction and the rapid fall in the price of commodities, was making itself increasingly felt in all countries where there was a gold currency. The fall in the prices of sugar and cotton, which are the chief exports of Egypt, was disastrous. The public service, stinted of funds, with reduction hanging over its head, was profoundly discouraged. Turkish and Arab magnates and landed proprietors looked with suspicion on the new British officials, whose objects they failed to understand, whose energies were inconvenient, and whose methods were distasteful. The French colony in Egypt, from the Consul-General to the humblest artisan, were ever watchful to add fuel to the flame. During

the spring and summer of 1884 the Agent had been in London attending the ineffectual financial conference. On his return to Cairo he was not long in recognizing the change in public temper, which promised to add not a little to the already bewildering difficulties of his position. "The delay which has taken place in arriving at a settlement of the finances of Egypt," he wrote, in the last days of 1884, "has exasperated public opinion and shaken confidence in the English Government. Intrigues of all descriptions are rife. The suffering caused by the continued non-payment of the indemnities is very great; trade is very slack; commercial transactions, so far as they are based on credit, are almost at a standstill. In a few months another financial crisis must inevitably occur, for the Egyptian Treasury will be again depleted." The material was piled for an explosion; and it was on the top of this accumulated discontent and despair that there suddenly fell a missile from a French battery charged with highly inflammable material.

The affair of the "Bosphore Egyptien" must not be treated too seriously. Critical as it seemed for a moment of time, it possessed no significance apart from the circumstances of the hour. The French colony in Egypt at that day resembled nothing so much as the Sudd of the Nile, which exists only to obstruct the fertilizing progress of the stream from whose waters it sucks sustenance for its existence. The "Bosphore," a French paper published in Cairo, was the organ of the malcontents. Its columns were rank with malignity, and loaded with poisonous emanations. Impertinence, frivolity, personalities, *suggestio falsi*, *suppressio veri*, trifling in serious matters, and seriousness in trifling matters were the notes of the Cairo journal. So far, perhaps, it was little worse than other journals nearer home. The "Bosphore," however, not only assailed and misrepre-

sented every act of the British and the Egyptian Government, but it made itself the agent of false news from the Soudan at a time when that province was engaged in a revolt with which many Egyptians were believed to sympathize. Its crowning offence was the publication in February, 1885, of an incendiary proclamation in Arabic, purporting to emanate from the Mahdi, and inviting Egyptians to join his cause. A countryman of the editor, remembered as Olivier Pain, who had recently carried the message of fraternity from Paris to Khartum, had found the Mahdi little disposed to interest himself in Parisian journalism, or to accept French patronage. He had died near El Obeid in profound misery, while his fellow-journalists were actively subserving as best they might the Mahdi's interests in Cairo. The "Bosphore" was an old offender; but when, other calumnies apart, it did not shrink from making itself an organ for disseminating the Mahdi's proclamations, Nubar Pasha thought the time had come to use his authority under the Capitulations, and to suppress it. He did so, with needful precautions. But it seems that the building where the printing press was situated was also a private domicile, inasmuch as certain lodgers of French extraction had rooms in it. Now to enter a European domicile requires nicer formalities under the Capitulations than to enter a printing office. Although few Englishmen in Cairo in those days would have wished uninvited to cross the threshold of a French domicile, the officer charged with the execution of the Government orders was compelled, in the course of his duty, to enter the premises in question, and thus, unwittingly, to transgress. The Capitulations had been violated! Here was an opportunity not to be neglected. All the French colony in Egypt screamed with one voice. In a moment the incident became a Cabinet question. The French



Consul-General in Cairo foamed at the mouth; M. de Freycinet in Paris demanded instant satisfaction; M. Waddington in London—who must have been greatly amused—exhausted himself in explaining to Lord Granville the heinous nature of the offence committed. Perfidious Albion, which had recently in the face of all Europe deliberately violated an international law, was now setting the example of abolishing the Capitulations. France—at least journalistic France—joined in the uproar. Our neighbours, in a word, threw themselves into one of those paroxysms of excitement under whose influence reason is eclipsed and sentiment rules supreme. To add a more comic note, Turkey appeared upon the scene, vindicating the sacred rights of Governments, and denouncing the excesses of journalism. Lord Granville must have been more embarrassed by his new ally than by his old antagonist. The long and the short of it was, that on France engaging herself to certain conditions (which were not observed), the Egyptian Government, under pressure from London, consented to climb down. Nubar Pasha, its Prime Minister, made a formal call upon the French Consul-General in order to express regret for the illegality committed; and the offending printing office was reopened. For the second time the British Cabinet was discomfited; the “revanche” was going merrily; but the difficulties of our countrymen in Egypt had at length arrived at the point where the tenacity of the national bulldog begins to show itself, and its jaws silently close in their most deadly and relentless grip.



## CHAPTER VIII

### POST TENEBRAS LUX

Retirement of British troops from the Soudan—Resumption of financial negotiations with the Powers—Lord Northbrook's proposals not acceptable—Arrangement come to, and embodied in Khedivial decree of July 27th, 1885—Substance of the arrangement—Bearings of the settlement on the finances of Egypt—Difficulties of British Government aggravated by general fears of impending evacuation, caused by its own language, and by that of the British Press.

WHILE Egypt was convulsed with the "Bosphore" incident, the Nile expedition was retracing its steps from Metammeh. General Gordon had fallen on January 26th, 1885; the Mahdi was in Khartum; the stars in their courses had fought for Sisera. It was the hour of the False Prophet and of the "Bosphore." The story of the Nile Campaign has been told by many pens, notably by Sir Reginald Wingate, in his "Mahdism and the Egyptian Soudan," and by Mr. Royle, in his "Egyptian Campaigns," and does not fall within the scope of this volume. It will be enough to say that after a brief interval of suspense, during which it was uncertain whether an effort was about to be made by Great Britain to destroy the Mahdi's power, the Cabinet decided to withdraw. The Nile frontier was fixed at Wadi Halfa; Suakin only was retained in the East. Such of the Egyptian garrisons as could be relieved through Abyssinian agency, Senhit, Amadib, Gera, and Galabat, were by degrees withdrawn.<sup>1</sup> Berber, Sennaar, and Gedaref had fallen; Kassala was shortly to fall; most of the garrisons being

<sup>1</sup> Emin Pasha and five hundred Egyptians were removed by Stanley three years later from the Equatorial Provinces.

massacred after capture. The latest of all the Khedive's possessions to be evacuated in the Soudan was Dongola. The last of the British troops left Dongola on June 15th, 1885, and the Nile Expeditionary force was broken up. A mixed force of British and Egyptian troops, called the Frontier Field Force, with headquarters at Assouan, was placed under command of Major-General Grenfell, while Brigadier-General Butler commanded the advanced brigade at Wadi Halfa, with outposts as far south as Kosheh, some forty-two miles south of the railway terminus at Akashah.

In February, 1885, Massowa, on the Red Sea, was occupied by Italy, with the consent of Great Britain and Egypt; in May, 1885, Harrar was made over to a local chief; Berbera and Zeila, on the Gulf of Aden, to the British Government.

Thus, for the time, the great question of the Soudan was settled. For eighteen months the eyes of all at home had been fixed on Khartum, and on the very eve of success had come crushing failure. Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet had always and in all circumstances declared their intention to evacuate the Soudan. There was a moment of wavering after the death of General Gordon, when the Government was nearly carried off its feet by popular emotion, and by the national clamour for revenge. But troubles were thickening on our Indian Frontier, and it seemed very possible that towards the close of 1885 we should be drawn into a war with Russia. British troops could not be spared; Egyptian troops unaided were not equal to the task. Egypt herself was in a condition little removed from bankruptcy, and could not devote a piastre to military operations. Her need of rest and recuperation was urgent. The Mahdi having died on June 22nd, 1885 (shortly after the British retired from Dongola), it seemed probable that pressure would be temporarily with-

drawn from the Egyptian frontier. In the face of much opposition, and in spite of violent attacks, the Government decided that Egypt should evacuate, though not necessarily abandon, the Soudan. Subsequent events have proved the wisdom of a decision which was received at the time with very considerable disfavour.

On November 24th the British Government had taken up once more the broken thread of its financial negotiations; and, basing itself on Lord Northbrook's report, had circulated fresh proposals. It is not necessary to dwell on them, for, interesting as they were, they failed. They were probably too drastic in their nature for the sensitive stomach of France. It was their aim to abolish in great measure the independent Administrations, such as the Daira and the Domains; to unify, and to extend to them State authority; and, incidentally, to emphasize in other directions the paramount rôle confided by the Powers to Great Britain. Lord Northbrook's project was opposed by France and was set aside, but the effort to come to an understanding continued. As England was willing that the indemnities should be paid as soon as a general settlement had been made, and as France was very anxious for their payment, there was a strong common interest in resuming negotiations, and in bringing them to a favourable close. Throughout the first part of 1885 efforts to establish a *modus vivendi* continued. They terminated in the publication of a Khedivial decree on July 27th of that year, which, with the assent of the Powers concerned, modified the Law of Liquidation. This decree remained in force till 1904, when it was finally superseded by the Convention of that year between Great Britain and France. An end was then put to all the complications brought about by previous agreements, and the hands of Egypt were at last freed.

The arrangements concluded in 1885 were threefold. First came a Declaration dated March 17th, and agreed to by the Governments of Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey, intimating the Sultan's sanction to an international loan of £9,000,000. The Declaration next recognized the justice of submitting the subjects of the several Powers resident in Egypt to the same taxes as were paid by the natives of Egypt. The Powers declared further that they accepted the application to their "nationals" (an ugly term, but favoured in diplomacy) of the House-tax, Stamp-tax, and Licence-tax in the same manner as to natives of Egypt; and they collectively undertook the immediate study of the necessary draft laws.

The next document, being an appendix to the Declaration, was a Convention between the Powers above named regarding the proposed loan. The loan was "intended partly to provide for the Alexandria indemnities, the payment of which is especially urgent; and, as regards the remainder, to settle the financial situation and secure the payment of certain extraordinary expenditure." The loan was to be for a sum not exceeding £9,000,000 bearing interest at 3 per cent. A fixed annuity of £315,000 was to be applied to its service, to be levied as a first charge on the revenues assigned to the service of the Privileged and Unified Debts. So much of the annuity as was not absorbed by interest was to be devoted to redemption. The loan was jointly guaranteed by all the Powers above named, with the exception of Turkey.

The third document of this important agreement was a draft of a decree, embodying the changes which had been agreed to in the terms of the Law of Liquidation. The principal provisions of the draft decree were, in the first place, those which arranged for payment of the indemnities.



Then followed the settlement to be made of a sum of £5,907,000, after liquidation of the indemnities. This sum was distributed as follows:—

	£
Deficits of 1884 and previous years . . . . .	2,657,000
„ „ 1885, estimated at . . . . .	1,200,000
Grant for irrigation works . . . . .	1,000,000
Commutation of pensions . . . . .	550,000
Funds reserved for the service of the Treasury . . . . .	500,000

A tax of 5 per cent, to the benefit of the Egyptian Treasury, was established on the amount of the coupons of the Privileged and Unified Debts falling due in 1885 and 1886. The bondholders would receive certificates of their claims to obtain repayment of this tax after 1886. If it was desired to continue the tax after 1886, an International Commission would be again summoned to make a fresh inquiry into, and a further settlement of, the resources of Egypt. The redemption of the Privileged and Unified Debts was suspended. Then followed four articles, in which were embodied the provisions regulating the relations henceforward to exist between the disposal of the assigned and non-assigned revenues—in other words, between the amount available to the Caisse de la Dette, as representing the public creditor, and the balance left for State expenditure to the Egyptian Government—with certain conditions regarding the disposal of surplus. Their substance was as follows:—

The excess of the assigned revenues was to be understood to mean the net Budget receipts on account of such revenues after deducting:—

1. The interest (3 per cent) and sinking fund ( $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent) of the new International Loan.
2. The interest at 5 per cent of the Privileged Debt.

3. The interest at 4 per cent of the Unified Debt.

In the case of non-assigned revenues, the surplus would be the difference between £E.5,237,000, "at which figure the expenses to be charged to the non-assigned revenues" (in other words, the State expenditure) "are fixed," and the Budget receipts of all kinds realized in the Provinces and Administrations, which were not specifically assigned to the service of the Public Debt. The annual cost of the State administration as fixed by the Law of Liquidation had been £E.4,897,888 inclusive; but since then the interest on the international guaranteed loan of £307,125, with other minor charges, had to be added. The details of this sum of £E.5,237,000 were fixed, department by department, and the total in each department was the "authorized expenditure" of such department. Without consent of the Powers it could not be exceeded, unless the State could arrange to meet the difference from savings in some other direction. It might, however, be increased by the sum necessary to bring the credits for the railway service up to the proportion of 45 per cent of their gross receipts. It might be further increased by the amount of certain subsidies payable to subordinate departments under the Law of Liquidation. [As a matter of fact, from time to time, the limits of this "authorized expenditure" were somewhat enlarged.] Should the revenue of the non-assigned provinces and Administration during the years 1885 and 1886 fall short of the figure of £E.5,237,000, the Caisse must make up the difference from its surplus on the assigned revenue. Should the revenues of the non-assigned provinces during those years exceed the above sum, the excess would be paid into the Caisse. All surplus of future years, after payment in full of coupons which had been held temporarily in suspense, would be divided equally between

the Budget of the authorized administrative expenditure of the Government and the service of the Sinking Fund.

On April 15th, 1887, *dies iræ*, the term of grace given in the Convention in regard to the suspended interest on the Debt would expire. The possible surplus of 1885 and 1886, after discharge during those years of the claims of the State and of the Caisse, would on that date be made over to the Commissioners, who would make good from it, so far as might be possible, the tax of 5 per cent deducted from the coupons of those years. The balance, if any, after payment of these and certain other specified arrears, would finally be divided between the Budget of the authorized administrative expenses of the Government and the service of the Sinking Fund.

If, on the other hand, the surplus of 1885 and 1886 was insufficient to meet the arrears of interest due to the 5 per cent tax, the delegates of the Powers would again assemble, and Egypt would be once more cast into the melting-pot.

Putting aside the special arrangements in regard to 1885 and 1886, the practical working of the Convention, so far as concerns later years, must be understood, if we are to keep a clear view of its bearings on the finances of Egypt, and if we are to understand the causes of dissensions which from time to time arose between the Government of Egypt and the Caisse. No better illustration can be given than that which is to be found on page 230 of the first edition of Lord Milner's "England in Egypt," which may be thus summarized:—

Taking £E.9,500,000 as the total revenue of Egypt in a given year, let us say that £E.4,000,000 goes to the Caisse, with a liability of £E.3,500,000, while £E.5,500,000 is the share of the Government, which requires £E.5,850,000 to meet its expenditure. The Caisse has thus a seeming surplus of £E.500,000, the Government has a seeming

deficit of £E.350,000. But let us further suppose that £E.300,000 of this latter sum falls under the head of "authorized expenditure." This excess, as above explained, can be demanded from the surplus in the hands of the Caisse, which is thus reduced from £E.500,000 to £E.200,000 to be divided equally between Caisse and Government. The former obtains its half-share of £E.100,000 to apply to the reduction of Debt; the latter, with its half-share of £E.100,000, wipes out the liability of £E.50,000 still outstanding on account of expenditure other than authorized, and closes the transaction, so far as its own accounts are concerned, with a net surplus of £E.50,000.

It will be seen presently that as time passed, and as the surplus in the hands of the Caisse accumulated, it was arranged that funds should, from time to time, be made available from that surplus on account of objects of expenditure approved by the Caisse before any sum was devoted to the Sinking Fund. In some cases these funds were given in the form of definite grants; at other times, as advances to be repaid. In the latter case, for every pound of expenditure incurred by the State two pounds had necessarily to be levied from the taxpayer. "Unauthorized expenditure" had to be met from any annual surplus of revenue over expenditure in the share of the public assets which was assigned to the State.

Looking back now at the schemes respectively put forward on successive occasions by the Governments of Great Britain and France, we can see that the British point of view was too pessimistic, the French forecast too optimistic, while the decision finally come to, if hard and needlessly complicated, was at least a decision which, with care and economy, could be effectively worked. Lessons of care and economy are never wasted on Governments; and a



compromise which in the space of two years allowed Egypt to free herself of her immediate difficulties, and to take heart of grace against the peril of internationalism, was a compromise with which her friends need not quarrel. If we must admit that there was, in truth, no case for the permanent reduction of interest which the British Government proposed, still less could Egypt, with the Soudan and other troubles yet on her hands, have faced the immediate future with no further aid than suspension of the Sinking Fund, which was the utmost limit of French concession. Sufficient temporary relief was what she needed. This was accorded her; and, for the rest, the care and capacity of the Financial Adviser and the Agent, with the rapidly growing prosperity of Egypt, soon bore her far from the shoals and rocks of insolvency into the wide sea of surplus revenues and increasing credit.

The chief points which the British Government had gained at the close of these protracted negotiations were that, in the first place there was a greater latitude as to the authorized limit of expenditure, and secondly, more facilities were given as to the share of the Government in surplus revenues. The hard-and-fast rule of the Law of Liquidation was relaxed by which any surplus in the assigned revenues, with exceptions immaterial to the present purpose, was to be devoted by the Caisse to a Sinking Fund, while the Government might be starving for funds wherewith to carry on the Administration. Still, all deductions made, the situation created for Egypt called for the utmost prudence and economy, and the method of settling accounts between the State and the representatives of its creditors was dangerously inelastic. The State would, from time to time, be found in need of funds for inevitable expenditure, very possibly of a highly remunerative character; while the Caisse would be congested with accumulations of its

share of the surplus. What might seem to the eye a satisfactory surplus of revenue would be found, on closer scrutiny, to work out into a deficiency for the State, and a further unneeded addition to the balance lying at the Caisse. Partly by the ability and resource of Mr. Vincent, his associates, and his successors, partly by the gradual growth of a more accommodating spirit on the part of the Caisse Commissioners, and partly owing to the general amelioration of the financial resources of Egypt, these anomalies, as years passed, were in a measure removed. But almost to the close of the century there was friction. When the abolition of the *Corvée* was ripe for execution, the Caisse delayed for three years a formal adjustment of the charge to be incurred. When the State wished to utilize a part of the annual saving, brought about by conversion of the Privileged Daira and Domains Loans, the Caisse to the very last refused its assent. When funds were appropriated by the Government from the reserve in 1896 for the military advance to Dongola, the Caisse denied that the charge fell into the category of "authorized expenditure," and dragged the Administration into Court. Even if an occasion were admitted as one in which the reserve balances might be employed, with a view to the development of Egyptian resources, there was endless discussion. As the financial situation of the Egyptian Government grew more and more secure, the attitude of the Caisse could scarcely fail to respond to the improvement. As early as 1888 we find Sir Evelyn Baring acknowledging its assistance. But it was not till 1904 that the Cerberus, whom we first found in 1876 guarding the creditors' treasure-chest against the defaulting Ismail Pasha, was relieved of all but nominal duty. He is still to be found at his old post. But his teeth are drawn, his eyes are dim, his hearing is dull, and his limbs palsied. In a

few years, when he dies, as he is doomed to die, of natural decay, the verdict on him will be that he was a faithful watchdog in his youth, a dog-in-the-manger in later life, and, in his closing years, superfluous.

It will be asked why the Powers should have insisted on tying down the discretion of Great Britain in Egypt with inexorable bonds. They had been willing enough to confide to Great Britain the guardianship and execution of the common interests, when they gave her their mandate to restore order in Egypt. She had freely spent blood and treasure in attaining the end set before her; why, when the end was gained, was she looked upon as little more reliable than an Oriental Government? Nothing would seem more illogical than to concur in the occupation of Egypt by British troops with a view to restoring solvency, and at the same time to refuse to Great Britain greater latitude in dealing with the finances than would have been conceded to a native Administration. In a great measure this anomaly was due to the sustained hostility of France. The interests of France in Egypt were unquestionably greater than those of any Power except Great Britain. But having turned her back on her partner in 1882, and having, at the critical moment, withdrawn from active co-operation with the British forces, she could only regain her position by doing all that was in her power to paralyse her former ally. She aimed, therefore, at repairing what she recognized as a blunder, and at recovering by compulsion what she had lost by diplomacy. If the Dual Control were not reinstated, some arrangement at any rate might be made which would secure her once more a stable footing in the country she had abandoned. Internationalism had retained a hold over Egypt, through the institution of the Caisse; here was a powerful agency ready to her hand



for embarrassing Egyptian financiers. France used therefore every effort, through her influence in the Caisse, to bring about such a collapse of the finances, when administered under British control, as would again bring about Egyptian insolvency. The French Press in Egypt openly preached this plan of campaign; with few exceptions, the French officials in the employ of Egypt sought to further it; the French diplomatic representatives in Egypt successively supported it. But the real cause of all the trouble was not France; it is to be found in the action of Great Britain herself. In season and out of season Her Majesty's Ministers never wearied of preaching on the text Evacuation. At the Conference of London, in 1884, Lord Granville thrust it almost ostentatiously before the eyes of his colleagues. While pressing for concessions and facilities which might reasonably have been accorded had it been certain that for a long time to come Egypt would be guided by British advice, Lord Granville went out of his way to speak of British occupation as terminable, if his financial scheme was accepted, at short notice. Now, if the Conference was to understand that it was in truth Cairo, not London, that they were dealing with, obviously matters must be very differently handled. British credit was one thing; Egyptian credit quite another. If the Powers were to reckon on Egypt only, then Law of Liquidation, Caisse de la Dette, International Control, would be alike necessary; and must be equally insisted on. No facilities for extravagance must be given; every obligation must be strictly enforced; every lapse from duty penalized. Latitude which might have largely been allowed to Great Britain, had she announced her intention of prolonged occupation, was refused to her when acting in the interest of finances of which she might soon relax her present control. Nor



was it Ministers only who were indiscreet. In Parliament and in the Press the same language was held. Evacuation was in the air, paralysing all spontaneous effort of European commerce in Egypt, disheartening our political and official friends, and giving fresh courage to our opponents. A section of popular sentiment actively supported withdrawal, for the heart of the country was sick, and the burden of Egypt was intolerable. It has been too much the custom to throw upon France the whole odium of the defective settlement of 1885. If matters were thereby made uncomfortable for the British Cabinet and for the British public, they had largely themselves to thank for it.

## CHAPTER IX

### UNDER CLOSE CANVAS

Commencement of new phase in Egyptian matters with Convention of 1885—First faint signs of improvement—Financial policy of Sir Evelyn Baring and Mr. Vincent—Period of enforced economies—Value of Mr. Fitzgerald's services—French officials in Egypt—Outbreak of brigandage: its cause—Revision of coinage—Description of the new coins brought into circulation.

WITH the fall of Khartum and the conclusion of what was known as the London Convention of March, 1885, the second phase in the general development of Egyptian affairs was ended. The first phase was identical with the mission of Lord Dufferin in 1882, and with the launching of Egypt in the following year on a new departure. The second phase dates from Sir Evelyn Baring's arrival in 1883, and comprises the troubled period of the Gordon episode, the abortive London Conference of 1884, and the International Settlement concluded in March, 1885, with which the last chapter closed. Many difficulties lay yet before the British Agent in the third phase, on which he was now entering, but none so critical as those which he had encountered. The Khalifa threatened invasion; the finances threatened insolvency. The latter was the greater calamity; for it was certain that the Khalifa could be repulsed, but it was yet to be ascertained whether Egypt had been allotted sufficient revenues to avert a fresh financial crisis. Four years were yet to come before the battle of Toski in 1889

definitely arrested the advance of the Dervishes, and before the surplus of that year, following on four years of equilibrium, made it clear that the danger of insolvency was passed. The years 1885 to 1889 therefore constitute the third phase. By the latter date it had become evident that the worst was over, and that whatever difficulties might still be in store, Egypt had little to fear from Khartum or from Paris. The third, like the second phase, is represented by constant struggle, but throughout there is growing prospect of relief. Fighting in the Soudan would be as severe in the neighbourhood of Suakin as on the Nile, but the issue would never be doubtful. The battle with insolvency, though calling at the outset for sustained attention, would more and more turn in favour of Egypt. The close of the third phase marks also the close of a purely defensive policy, whether military or financial. After 1889 there is everywhere expansion. It is becoming clear that the star of the Khalifa is declining, and that the baleful influence emanating from the Quai d'Orsay is waning. On the one hand, the Egyptian army is preparing for a forward movement; on the other, the Financial Adviser is engaged in the remission of obnoxious taxes, and in projects of administrative reform. But we are still far from this happy hour, and must watch for a while the husbanding of resources and the quiet preparation for more active movement which characterize the third phase.

In his report for the year 1903 Lord Cromer has recapitulated his policy in the period from 1883 onwards. It will be convenient to recall its outlines. As soon as British influence had fairly established itself, and when the situation as it existed in 1883 and 1884 had been finally liquidated, three points emerged into prominence, as landmarks. In the first place, the people were overtaxed; and the fiscal system, although improved during the tenure of the

second Dual Control (1880-1882), was still extremely defective. In the second place, large capital expenditure, especially in the direction of drainage and irrigation works, was necessary. Finally, reforms, involving considerable expenditure, were needed in every department. It was clear that the simultaneous attainment of all these objects was impossible; they were, for the time being, mutually destructive. To a large extent it was necessary to choose between fiscal and administrative reform. The decision at which Sir Evelyn Baring arrived was to place in the first rank fiscal reform, followed as soon as might be by relief to the taxpayers. Such sums as the Government could spare would be devoted to remunerative public works, notably to works of irrigation and drainage. Administrative reform, which called for heavy and immediate expenditure, would be relegated to the third rank. Not that this class of reform would be neglected, but grants to purely administrative departments, such as Judicial, Prisons, Medical or Sanitary, were subordinated to the execution of the main portion of the policy, viz. to fiscal reform and to remunerative public works.

During the two years following 1885 little could be done in the way of fiscal reform; still less, in regard to substantial relief to the taxpayers. Financially, the great business of Egypt during the years 1885, 1886, and 1887 was to make the two ends meet, and to have a balance of surplus revenue to throw in the latter year to the international wolves. The burden of those two years fell heavily on the Agent and on the Financial Adviser. If little interest can be taken in a policy of mere economizing, less credit can be expected from it. A hundred interests are crippled by economies, and as many resentments are awakened. No reward or advancement, however well deserved, can be given where funds do not allow



of them. Hope of assistance cannot be held out to overworked establishments. Negation and inaction are little attractive, and for the time seem fruitless. Far more was this the case when a disorganized Egypt was wasting in the absence of reform, and when the impatient countrymen of the would-be reformers were urging them to proceed, and to justify before the world our presence in Egypt.

Neither Sir Evelyn Baring nor Mr. Vincent shrank from the unpopularity or the unattractiveness of the task they had set themselves. If the crisis before them was to be squarely met—if they were to be ready on the 15th April, 1887, to meet the bill which would on that date fall in—they must have resort to taxation or to rigid parsimony. Parsimony was their choice. Nevertheless, bleak as was the prospect, there were compensations. Something considerable had already been accomplished. The coinage, which had fallen into a lamentable state, had been restored; a convention had been arranged with Greece by which the import revenues on tobacco were sensibly increased; while an end was put to the system of smuggling which was a daily scandal and blot on Egyptian Administration, a disgrace to the Greek officials in Egypt who connived at it, and the source of considerable but ineffective coastguard expenditure from Egyptian revenues. The Customs conventions, referred to in a previous page, had also been concluded. Sir Evelyn Baring and Mr. Vincent had lived through 1884. Twice during that year they had been within £E.5000 of insolvency. The pitiless pelting of that year of storms was in any case at an end. If coming years were to be full of difficulties, with *Æneas* they could take heart of courage, and ejaculate, "*O! passi graviora! dabit Deus his quoque finem.*" The indemnities were paid; trade would revive; exports and imports would improve. The irrigation officers were hard at work: chosen

and capable men, full of zeal and resource. The new international settlement of the finances made it at least possible to carry on ; payment of full statutory interest on the coupons, and the exigencies of the Sinking Fund, were not for the moment imperative. The Soudan, if not at rest, was comparatively inactive ; the drain of the last three years on Egyptian finances to meet the military operations was materially lightened. There was breathing time ; and both Sir Evelyn Baring and Mr. Vincent made the most of it. If the final responsibility lay on the former, the latter had to encounter the burden of the daily struggle. Of all who have successively held since 1883 the office of Financial Adviser, Mr. Vincent was the most tried and tested. His successors prospered by his labours, and garnered at ease where he had sown under the burden of the hot Egyptian day. Birds build nests where other birds may hatch their young ; bees labour to make honey, that men may eat it. The pleasure of increasing salaries, of adding to the strength of establishments, of furnishing funds for reforms, of remitting taxation, was reserved for Mr. Palmer or Mr. Gorst ; to Mr. Vincent was assigned the thankless task of refusing supplies alike to the deserving and the undeserving. Fertile in expedients, and pitiless in economy, he was sustained by the abiding conviction that all would come right in the end. In the darkest hour he never lost hope ; and the dawn of a brighter day broke upon him before he made over office to his successor.

In his conflict with the departments, Mr. Vincent had been careful to associate with himself the Finance Committee referred to on page 95 of this volume. Its members were all interested in economy, and pressure from without on the Financial Adviser was weakened by being distributed over a wider area. Not only did the Committee

give direct strength to the Treasury, but its existence checked irregular claims. Demands for pensions outside the provisions of the regulations, daily requests for untenable gratuities, the thousand and one little irregularities, in short, which are of constant recurrence under purely Eastern methods of administration (and not unknown elsewhere), became more and more rare. No new appointment and no promotion could be made without the sanction both of the Committee of Finance and of the Council of Ministers. The Council, indeed, imposed on itself a self-denying ordinance, and denied itself the right of granting supplementary credits not provided for in the Budget, unless justified by causes which could not have been foreseen at the time the Budget was prepared.

Mr. Vincent was also materially assisted by the results of the previous five years' labour, persistently and quietly carried on in the accounts department, under the control and authority of Mr. (now Sir Gerald) Fitzgerald. Mr. Fitzgerald, in the course of 1885, quitted Egypt for a high post at the Admiralty in London, but not before he had organized in Cairo an efficient system of public accounting. He had assisted in the last agonies of Ismail Pasha, in 1879; and, in succeeding years, had by degrees brought order out of chaos. His task was singularly difficult. He had not only to extract light from the almost visible darkness of Coptic accounting, but he had to do so under the eyes of a group of very competent French Inspectors of Finance, who, in one or other capacity, were employed in Egypt, both before and after the occupation. Partly, it may be, from national pique at seeing a department in British hands which they regarded as peculiarly their own; partly, perhaps, from the jealousy of specialists; partly because they honestly believed that the French



system of public accounts was the best of all possible systems—these gentlemen were apt to make themselves merry at the cost of Mr. Fitzgerald and his reforms. But, however much he might be assailed by sallies of wit, or exposed to more pointed denunciation, Mr. Fitzgerald held always on his way with perfect urbanity and temper, with a dogged tenacity which no sarcasm could shake, and a smiling imperturbability which no rude assaults might exasperate. In the end he triumphed, and such of his assailants as had not disappeared from the scene were doomed to be witnesses of his success. The mysteries of accounting, like the mysteries of theology, must be handled by the uninitiated with reverence. But one may perhaps be pardoned for venturing the suggestion that, whether in one or other pursuit, there may be many methods of attaining the same end ; and that all such methods, faithfully exercised in the hands of God-fearing men, point alike to the ultimate balancing of the account.

Mr. Fitzgerald was for six years one of the most prominent of the small band of British officials in Egypt in the early eighties, of whom Lord Dufferin in his Report wrote with much kindly emphasis and recognition, and to the value of whose labours Mr. Goschen generously testified in the House of Commons. The gentlemen of England, who sit at home at ease, little know, and often little reck, how well their interests are looked after by their brethren under alien skies. Fortunate may these consider themselves if they escape unscathed from the virulence of party denunciation ; if their efforts are not neutralized by ill-informed opposition ; or at best, if their energies are not thwarted by that complacent ignorance on questions outside insular experience which characterizes many of their fellow-countrymen at home.



Mr. Fitzgerald had taken charge of the accounts at a singularly unfavourable moment. Ismail Pasha's last hour of rule was approaching. Creditors were crowding day and night into the reception-rooms of Abdin, and infesting throughout office hours the corridors of the Treasury. At that time, and under orders then existing, the sole matter of interest to the Minister of Finance was to know the sum total that each Administration could pay into the Treasury. So long as revenue was gathered in, the source from which it came mattered little. The authority for expenditure, and the year of account, were alike disregarded. Egypt, like the British public in the music-hall minstrelsy of 1900, was invited to pay; the rest concerned the authorities. So long, indeed, as money came in, and the less it was accounted for, the better, possibly, the Government was pleased. In contrast to all this Mr. Fitzgerald could claim, on leaving Egypt, to have left behind him a civilized system of accounting. Reliable Budgets had been framed since 1880, on reasonable figures. Effective control had been established over receipts and expenditure. Rapid audit and centralization of accounts had been organized. Financial statements showing receipts and expenditure were issued monthly; and shortly after the completion of the financial year an annual account was published, showing in fullest detail the whole of the past year's financial operations. Finally, by his own personality, Mr. Fitzgerald had set a pattern of conscientious care and cheerful industry which was a bright example to his countrymen employed in the service of the Khedive.

Mention has been made of French officials in Egypt. Their day was short, but brilliant. They were for the most part men of marked ability and untiring industry; selected, as a rule, from among the Inspectors of Finance who are attached to the French Treasury. A few who

were in joint charge with an English and Egyptian colleague of one or other of the Administrations affiliated to the Debt, linger in Egypt. But the days of these Administrations are numbered ; the Caisse and the Domains alone remain at this hour ; and when, before many years are over, these Administrations also are liquidated and their accounts closed, the last of the French officials who were once yoked with British colleagues will disappear. While in those days Frenchmen and Englishmen almost without exception preserved the most friendly relations with one another—at a later hour the French members of the Caisse suffered themselves to go astray ; we are speaking here of earlier and less troubled times—the contrast between them was amusing. Keen of wit, incisive of tongue, choleric of disposition, sensitive as children, kindly as women, the Frenchman was the very opposite of the phlegmatic, imperturbable Briton whom he lugged along with him in his heated course. Which of the pair did the most useful work it was not always easy to say, but the paces and showy movement of the Frenchmen were effective. They were never seen on the tennis court, nor in the saddle ; nor did field sports attract them. Constant and often heated discussion with one or other was their relaxation ; the black official portfolio their symbol ; the frock-coat their habitual garb. There must have been something abhorrent to their passion for correctness in the negligent costume, the slack disregard of formality, the indifference to the outward and visible signs of office, which in Egypt, as elsewhere, distinguish Englishmen. But difference of temperament and of training seemed to draw together, rather than to repel. To their honour, be it said, the French sought to do their duty as conscientiously by the country which employed them, and by the colleagues who worked with

them, as though their portion had been in France, and their colleagues of their own nation. If they were of necessity good Frenchmen, they were no less honest Egyptian. A far greater strain was put upon them than upon our people; for the French colony in Egypt was divided to distraction in politics, and scrutinized with a morbid eye the antecedents and action of every one by whom its country was represented. Whatever the verdict of their countrymen may have been, British colleagues recognized that their French associates were good men and true; worthy representatives of the great country from which they came; pleasant in their private lives, as in public life they were above reproach. De Blignières, Bellaigue de Bughas, Bouteron, are gone to the silent land (if any land, indeed, be silent where the spirits of the French dead do congregate); Liron d'Airolles, Gay Lussac, Barois, and others, happily remain with us. Later political animosities apart, the brief association of French and English officials in Egypt was a pleasant incident in the lives of all concerned; proving that, elements of doubt and occasions of mistrust notwithstanding, the two peoples can work together, respect one another, appreciate and enjoy the society and friendship of one another, and can look back with pleasure, as the day's work grows to an end, on happy and useful hours when they laboured in a common interest.

There is little to add regarding Egypt in 1885, beyond an outbreak which, though described officially as brigandage, was in reality disorder inseparable from a time of transition, when the men and methods of a former order are falling into disuse, and when the new order has not yet thoroughly established itself. There was a temporary paralysis of the old authority, which had been much abused; while the authority substituted in its place had



not as yet become adequate to its new duties. This brigandage was in part the outcome of the conflict of opinion between Egyptian and British officials as to the proper handling and officering of the new police, and it was in a measure also due to the inexperience of the new native Tribunals recently organized under Lord Dufferin's scheme. It was put down with the aid of a Commission, which greatly abused its authority; cruelties and tortures were resorted to in the effort to detect and to suppress crime; and at a later date it became necessary that the proceedings of the Commission itself should be hauled into the light of day and held up to public reprobation.

The revision of the Egyptian coinage had been decided on during the Control, and was under consideration when the disturbances of 1882 brought all useful work to a standstill. It was taken up again, under Mr. Vincent's auspices, in 1884, and the new coinage was introduced in the commencement of 1886. The unit of the currency had always been the Egyptian pound, but that coin was little circulated. The amount of silver coin minted in Cairo—the chief currency of the country being silver—had been, for some time past, insufficient for the public needs; the piastre, which was supposed to be equivalent to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. of our money, was indifferently minted; much of it was debased, and much of the circulating coin was counterfeit. The country had been flooded, especially since the demonetization of silver after 1876 by the chief European Governments, with false or worn coins, supplemented by disused European coinage, such as the Maria-Theresa talari, and the Roumanian franc. There was no silver coinage smaller than the piastre; and a copper coinage, unrecognized by the Government, passed current among the poorer classes. It was decided to retain a gold standard, with a subordinate coinage of



silver, nickel, and bronze, based upon a decimal notation. The unit retained was the Egyptian pound, which is equivalent to £1. 0s. 6d. of our money. For purposes of notation the Egyptian pound is regarded as composed of one thousand constituent parts (millièmes). Its silver equivalent is 100 piastres: the piastre coinage again being composed of pieces of the value of 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1 piastre. The smaller coinage is in nickel and in bronze; the former consisting of three classes of coins, having respectively the value of  $\frac{5}{10}$ ,  $\frac{2}{10}$ , and  $\frac{1}{10}$  of a piastre; the bronze coinage being represented by coins of the value of  $\frac{1}{20}$  and  $\frac{1}{40}$  of a piastre. The maximum issue of silver token money was not to exceed 40 piastres per head of population; the nickel and bronze coins being limited to a ratio of 8 piastres per head. The total to be ultimately issued was not to exceed £E.2,720,000 in silver and £E.544,000 in copper and bronze. Silver was made legal tender up to a maximum of 200 piastres; nickel and bronze up to a maximum of 10 piastres. The English pound sterling, the French gold piece of 20 francs, and the Turkish pound were also to be accepted as legal tender. This reform of the currency put an end to the confusion up to that time existing, and the new coins passed into circulation without difficulty or question; the Government meanwhile deriving a small profit from the operation.

The standard of purity of the Egyptian gold pound, it may be added, is 875 millièmes, or thousandths, of gold, alloyed with 125 millièmes of copper. The silver coinage consists of  $833\frac{1}{3}$  millièmes of silver and  $166\frac{2}{3}$  millièmes of copper. The standard weight of a gold pound is 8500 grammes, the gramme being equal to 15'43248 grains troy. The silver piece of 20 piastres weighs 28 grammes.

## CHAPTER X

### THE DRUMMOND WOLFF MISSION

Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff to Egypt—Inconsistent attitude of successive British Governments during nineteenth century towards the Sultan of Turkey—Objects of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission—Text of Lord Salisbury's instructions—Convention signed on October 24th, 1885, at Constantinople—Sir H. Drummond Wolff and Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha proceed to Cairo—Failure of Mission there—Sir H. Drummond Wolff signs a second Convention on May 22nd, 1887, at Constantinople—Opposed by Russian and French Ambassadors—Sultan declines to ratify the Convention—End of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission—Comments on the incident.

BRIEF as was the truce called by the Agreement between Great Britain and the Powers in their financial controversies over Egypt, it was so far preferable to open warfare in that it gave our countrymen breathing time. Sir Evelyn Baring might reasonably hope that for the next two years at least he could devote his energies undisturbed to the financial problem. It needed all the attention he could give it; and the alternative to success in dealing with it was internationalism, than which there could be no greater disaster. But this brief and necessary respite was denied him. Scarcely had the indemnities been paid, when a note of further complications was struck from London, which echoed in Constantinople, and, reaching Cairo, filled it with fresh disquietude. In a story full of surprises there is probably none which, looked at by the light of a later day, is more unexpected than the mission to Egypt of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, ac-

accompanied by the eminent Turkish Field-Marshal Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha. Sir Henry had been member for Portsmouth, but lost his seat at the general election of 1885. The scheme of this volume does not permit of lengthened narration of abortive projects. But some space must be given to this Mission, because it illustrates the influences to which the foreign interests of the empire are subjected by party politicians in England, the indifference with which even the more important pieces are regarded on the diplomatic chess-board, and the unsuspected cross-currents which underlie the surface of affairs, and sometimes carry us with them in a direction wholly different from that which, on embarking, we had contemplated. Scarcely had there been concluded a Convention with Europe which rested on the recognition of British responsibility for Egypt, when the British Cabinet hastened to offer to share its responsibility with the Turk. In face of the notorious fact that we were in Egypt, not so much to rescue Turkish rule from Egyptian bayonets as to rescue the Egyptian from the tyranny of Turkish rule, we proposed to reaffirm, by a solemn and spontaneous act, Turkish influence over the vexed valley of the Nile. The ink was scarcely dry with which Sir Evelyn Baring had been commissioned to work out the salvation of the finances and administration of Egypt, when an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary was sent from London, not only to take formally out of the Agent's hands the whole business of political affairs, but to report upon the progress made under his direction in the internal regeneration of the country, and to suggest projects for improvement. The mere fact of the presence of two High Commissioners in Egypt would inevitably minimize and neutralize that unique and paramount influence without which the Agent could scarcely hope to bring the business entrusted to him to a successful end.

Local intrigues would seek to undermine him; hostile interests would unite against him; the little world of Cairo would be convulsed with jealousies and wild hopes; the labour "*in vacuo*" which was as needful to a British Agent as to a legislative body in Egypt would become impossible to him.

No useful end can now be served by speculating on the origin of this Mission. The Gladstone Ministry had fallen, and Lord Salisbury had assumed office. Change of men brought change of measures; fresh influences were at work; the long disease of Egypt seemed to call for some new form of treatment. It was probably desired to placate the Sultan by agreement as to evacuation by the British, and by the possible employment of Turkish troops in Egypt. The Mission may have originated in the hope of conciliating France by the withdrawal within a given time of the British occupation. It may have been the outward and visible expression of some deep inward political scheme; or it may have had a less exalted origin. Perhaps the most remarkable feature connected with it was the further illustration it gave of our extraordinary methods of dealing with the Turk. Nothing should seem more unaccountable to future historians than the relations of Great Britain throughout the nineteenth century with the Sultan. At its commencement we are seen espousing the cause of the Turk against Napoleon; a little later we have sided with Mamelukes, who have revolted against the Porte. In the course of a few years we are sinking the Sultan's ships at Navarino. But, before very long, the Turk is clinging to our skirts in the Crimea; then dazzling the British public with his diamonds at a monster ball in the India Office; only to be held up shortly to execration as the Unspeakable, the Bag and Baggage Man, the congenial subject of Abdul the Assassin. When next we see



this eccentric pair, the Briton is covering Constantinople with his guns, and shielding the Turk from the assaults of a Russian army. Next, Egypt is invaded by Great Britain, to the violent displeasure of the Turk, and the Egyptian lamb is taken to the lion's bosom from under the knife of Abdul. When behold, in the space of three short years, the amazing inseparables are again before us, bowing and smiling, hand in hand together, British High Commissioner and Turkish High Commissioner, intent this time on union of hearts ; but only to be forcibly torn asunder by French and Russian diplomatists, and doomed again to separation. It is little wonder that at the close of the century the Sublime Porte should prefer the vigorous embraces of the Teuton to the brief and ill-omened advances of his Anglo-Saxon cousin.

Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission was comprised in two distinct phases. In the first, which was preparatory, he was to go to Egypt with instructions which are here reproduced almost in full, because, read by the light of subsequent events, they are of singular interest. In the second stage he was to go to Constantinople, and conclude a Convention with the Porte, having for its object the withdrawal of the British occupation of Egypt within a term of years ; and an agreement for joint occupation, in certain circumstances, by Great Britain and Turkey. The first Mission covered the interval between August, 1885, and January, 1887. The second Mission commenced in January, 1887, and was brought to an end in July of the same year.

On August 7th, 1885, Lord Salisbury wrote to Sir H. Drummond Wolff, informing him that he had been accredited by Her Majesty as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Sultan

"on a special mission having reference to the affairs of Egypt. It is the wish of Her Majesty's Government

to recognize in its full significance the position which is secured to His Majesty the Sultan as Sovereign of Egypt by Treaties and other instruments having a force under international law. They are of opinion that the authority of the Sultan over a large portion of the Muhammadan world which exists under his rule will be much assured by a due recognition of his legitimate position in respect to Egypt; and, on the other hand, they believe it is in His Majesty's power to contribute materially to the establishment of settled order and good government in portions of that country which have recently been subject to the calamity of armed rebellion. The co-operation of the Sultan will doubtless exercise a marked influence on the minds of large bodies of the inhabitants who profess the faith of Islam, and will neutralize any evil effects arising from any suspicion they may have entertained that it was intended to subject them to the domination of races differing from themselves in faith. The Sultan also possesses in the various races under his rule the means of supplying soldiers to whom the climate of the southern territories of Egypt is not injurious; and he is therefore in a position to bring to bear upon the task of restoring and maintaining order in those regions brave and efficient troops, who will suffer under no material disadvantages to which the insurgent inhabitants of the country itself are not exposed.

"These considerations make it a matter of high importance, both to the welfare of Egypt and to the objects which H.M.'s Government have had in view, that the military co-operation of the Sultan should be obtained in maintaining order in some portions of the Egyptian territory which are no longer protected by Egyptian troops. Such a step on his part would do much to establish his just rights as ascertained by Treaty, and it would add lustre to the prestige which the name of his Government enjoys in the more distant provinces of his Empire. . . . You will of course point out to His Majesty that in some way or other it is an obligation incumbent on the British Government to

do what is in their power to provide for the pacification and settled order of the Soudan. In their opinion the military co-operation of the Sultan will be the most effective plan for obtaining this result; but if that co-operation should be denied them, they will not be thereby released from their obligation. It will be necessary for them to look out for other means of providing for the defence and order of the Soudan. . . . It will be the duty, in such a case, of H.M.'s Government to ascertain how far native influences may be available on which a settled form of government can be built; or whether in any degree it is necessary to recur to foreign assistance; but it will not escape the Government of the Sultan that either of these alternatives will tend to diminish rather than to increase the strength of the bond which unites Egypt with Turkey.

"The course of action which you will pursue in Egypt must be largely influenced by the result of your negotiations in Constantinople; and, until that result is known, detailed instructions on the point will be impossible. But the general object of your mission will be, in the first instance, to secure for this country the amount of influence which is necessary for its own Imperial interests, and subject to that condition, to provide a strong and efficient Egyptian Government as free as possible from foreign interference. The facilities for foreign interference furnished by the international obligations which now attach to so many branches of Egyptian Administration will be found to depend principally upon the unsatisfactory position of Egyptian finances. If Egypt were in a condition to pay her way with ease, the opportunities for interference would diminish, and in many cases disappear. It will be your duty to satisfy yourself as to the present expenditure of the Egyptian Government, especially so far as it is influenced by the employment of foreign agents. . . . Reforms in the Administration of Egypt in many vital points are undoubtedly required, and H.M.'s Government would shrink from any action under which the attainment of that



improvement would be retarded. But there is a growing impression that the influence of England has been injured, and the cause of true progress has been arrested, by the precipitancy with which an Oriental population has been compelled to accept reforms conceived in the spirit of Western civilization. H.M.'s Government will not attempt to lay down beforehand the degree to which financial ease or popularity with the natives can be safely obtained by dispensing with European agency. The process, undertaken rashly, may easily be carried too far. The native community cannot be governed according to its own ideas entirely. I do not attempt to establish beforehand a balance between the two considerations. I only wish to indicate, for your investigation and report, one of the directions in which a remedy is probably to be sought for the most serious evil under which Egypt is at present labouring."

On October 24th, 1885, a Convention was signed by the British Envoy Extraordinary and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs providing for joint examination of the measures to be adopted ; first, for the best means of tranquillizing the Soudan by pacific means ; second, for the reorganization, in concert with H.H. the Khedive, of the Egyptian army ; third, for introducing such modifications as might be considered necessary, within the limits of the Imperial Firman, in all branches of the Egyptian Administration. Finally, the international engagements contracted by the Khedive were to be approved by the Ottoman Government, so far as they were not contrary to the privileges created by the Imperial Firmans. As soon as the two High Commissioners had established the security of the position, and as soon as the good working and stability of the Egyptian Government were assured, the High Commissioners would present a Report to their respective Governments, who would consult as to the con-



clusion of a Convention regulating the withdrawal of the British troops from Egypt in a convenient period.

The gist of the instructions furnished to the British High Commissioner, put into undiplomatic English, would seem to have been this: We wish to make a cat's paw of the Turk, and at the same time to induce him to recognize our right, exclusive to all but himself, to land in certain circumstances our troops in Egypt. Induce him to take on himself the business of smashing the Khalifa. If he hesitates, warn him that we may establish a Government composed of local material in the Soudan which may prove not much to his liking; or, failing that, we may persuade some foreign Power to restore order there. If he agrees to our proposals, in a given period of time we will withdraw British troops from Egypt. As to that country, overhaul expenditure, get rid of as many European officials as you can; throw cold water on too great zeal; and do not worry the Egyptians with reforms more than you can help. But keep your eyes very carefully on the finances.

The understanding with Constantinople having been duly embodied in a Convention, the High Commissioners left Constantinople for Egypt to put its provisions into effect. It was to be the especial care of the Turk to consult with the Khedive as to the best means of tranquillizing the Soudan by pacific measures, while keeping his British colleague informed of the course of their deliberations. It would be the business of the British High Commissioner to examine all branches of the Egyptian Administration, and in concert with his colleague and with the Khedive, to introduce into them needful modifications. As soon as the good working and stability of the Egyptian Government, and the security of her frontiers had been established by these three in council, the High Commissioners would

report to their respective Governments, who would consult as to the withdrawal of the British troops from Egypt within a convenient period. In all this, of Her Majesty's Agent in Egypt, not a word; like the Soudan to Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, like the Mahdi to General Gordon, he was a *quantité négligeable*; for from of old, as we know, in the East, the head stone in the corner has been the stone which builders have been seen to reject. The High Commissioners, furnished with their instructions, in due course arrived in Cairo, and entered upon business. They set themselves to improve upon Sir Evelyn Wood's methods of creating a new Egyptian army; to assist Sir Evelyn Baring in the reform of Egyptian administration, and in reorganizing the finances; while hoping to induce the Soudan to submit to their caresses, and to prevail on the Dervishes to re-enter the circle of those happy peoples who acknowledge the sovereignty of the Turkish Sultan.

It would be waste of words to dwell upon the result of the Mission. The High Commissioners failed in every respect. They could not agree as to the strength and composition of the new Egyptian army; they could not suggest to the Agent any practical hints in aid of his measures of reform or of finance; they could not induce a single Dervish to trust to the tender mercies of the Turk. They remained for many months in Cairo (one, indeed, the Field-Marshal, remains to this hour) writing reports, and constrained to witness efficiency where they had been prepared to find matter for revision. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's contributions to the Blue Books deal exclusively with political or with purely international aspects of Egyptian questions, and have no practical bearing on the problems which, while he was in Egypt, were in immediate course of solution. But they are not

without their use to the student, because they furnish a handbook of information on matters still awaiting review and readjustment which cannot elsewhere be so readily obtained. Such are the Capitulations, the Mixed Tribunals, the Consular Jurisdiction. The majority of these questions were not ripe for negotiation in 1886, nor can they even now be taken up with prospect of success. But when the time arrives for them to be seriously handled, the papers to which we refer will be found to contain much information brought together in a convenient and available form.

It says much for the sense and temper of all concerned that the temporary occupation of Cairo by the High Commissioners passed over without a ripple on the surface of public business. For a man in Sir Evelyn Baring's position the episode could not but have been embarrassing. The Agent's local knowledge, and much of the influence exercised by him in Egypt, necessarily suffered eclipse for a time, while the twin luminaries, the Envoys, were employed in preparing a settlement of the Egyptian question, through the arts and contrivances of diplomacy. But the position was not one for diplomats ; it required the firm hand, and the acquired skill, of the competent financial and administrative craftsman. Most men who have passed their lives in Eastern dependencies will agree that parliamentary experience and a ready wit, however appreciated at Westminster, are likely to prove but sorry substitutes for the hardheaded watchfulness and patient insistency which are needed for executive efficiency. Sir Evelyn Wood was spared the trial, for he had left Egypt in March, 1885, and General Grenfell had succeeded him. A Turkish Field-Marshal, and a genial British politician, admirable as they were in their own spheres of action, were not the men to instruct General



Grenfell as to his duties. Was the labour of the British military officer, who had made a soldier of the Egyptian, and had infused into him something of his own gallant spirit, to be labour lost? Were Turkish officers eventually to replace General Grenfell and his little staff of devoted sub-alterns—Kitchener, Wingate, Wodehouse, Hallam Parr? If so, what would become of the discipline, the moral influence, the humanity, above all, the sympathy, which had shown themselves such powerful agencies in the making of the new Egyptian army? What would the Egyptian officer think of the return of the Circassian? of the arrival of the Turk at the invitation of the Briton? But it is useless to continue; the scheme for reconstruction of the Egyptian army, for the reorganization of the finances, no less than for the spreading of the net in the sight of the Dervish, was too vague to have much probability of success. As soon as he had satisfied himself that he could not advance matters by remaining in Cairo, the British High Commissioner left Egypt. Towards the close of 1886 he returned to London, and early in 1887 he transferred himself to Constantinople, where he entered undismayed on the second phase of his Mission. His colleague remained in Cairo.

On May 22nd, 1887, yet another Convention was signed by Sir Henry Drummond Wolff and Muhammad Said Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, but it was never ratified, and fell stillborn. This Convention arranged for the military defence and organization of Egypt. At the end of three years from the date of the Convention Great Britain would withdraw her troops, if no internal or external danger then threatened. Should such danger threaten, Great Britain would withdraw her troops as soon as it was over; and two years after withdrawal would abandon all concern whatever in the military measures of defence for Egypt. On the withdrawal of the British



troops, Egypt would enjoy the principle of territorial immunity ; and, on the ratification of the Convention, the Great Powers would be invited to sign an Act recognizing and guaranteeing the inviolability of Egyptian territory. No Power would have the right to land troops in Egypt except under the Convention. But "the Imperial Ottoman Government will make use of its right of occupying Egypt militarily, if there are reasons to fear an invasion from without, or if order and security in the interior were disturbed, or if the Khedivate of Egypt refused to execute its duties towards the Sovereign Court, or its international obligations." In the above-mentioned cases the British Government might also send troops to Egypt, which, in common with the Ottoman troops, would be withdrawn as soon as the cause of interference had ceased. If the Ottoman Government by reason of hindrances did not, on its part, send troops, a Turkish Commissioner would be attached to the British troops. An Annex to the Convention further provided that the two Governments should jointly submit to the Powers proposals for the amelioration of the Administration of the Domains, Daira Sanieh, and railways ; for defining the powers of the Caisse of the Public Debt, and for regulating the finances of Egypt. Proposals regarding the Press, the quarantine regulations, and legislation applicable to foreigners would also be drawn up. Egypt's tribute to Turkey would be made a first charge on the Egyptian Treasury ; and no alterations in the powers of the Financial Adviser could be admitted, "who, by his position, and the functions which he exercises, offers an indispensable guarantee for the good administration of the Egyptian finances, and the interests of the creditors of that country."

On July 15th, 1887, Her Majesty's Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary finally turned his back on Constantinople.

The threats of the Russian and French Ambassadors had so shaken the nerves of the Sultan and his advisers that they could not bring themselves to ratify the Convention. The exclusive right of interference, reserved under the Convention to Great Britain and to Turkey, proved itself in the highest degree inadmissible to the above Powers, and in the face of their opposition the Sultan quailed and withdrew. This much had at least been gained, that the Sultan had been given a fair occasion for securing British evacuation of Egypt; if he had failed to profit by it, he could not quarrel with us for continuing in possession.

To become a sworn partner of the Sultan in any circumstances, and for any ends, must be to Great Britain matter for hesitation. But, in view of the attitude adopted by Great Britain, and the assurances lavished *urbi et orbi* in 1883, to have become a partner of the Turk with the contingent object of coercing the Egyptian, would have seemed little short of treason. What of Lord Dufferin's Institutions? What of the promised liberties? What of the metamorphic spirit of the age? of the lips of Memnon? Had Great Britain been elsewhere occupied (as, for example, from 1900 to 1902), it is not wholly inconceivable that disorder, by a coincidence, might at that moment have arisen in Egypt. There might have recurred a movement having, say, for its end, as in 1882, the deposition of the Khedive. The military forces of Great Britain being fully engaged, the landing of Turkish troops might have been found necessary for the suppression of such disorders; and, all other concomitant incidents of Turkish warfare apart, with the landing of Turkish troops there would probably have been an ending of the Khedivate, of a semi-independent Egypt, and of any hope of amelioration for the Egyptian. If we have not succeeded in getting

even the one solitary Turk who entered Egypt with our High Commissioner to quit it, what would have happened had his brethren arrived in their thousands?

It would seem to have been the view of the British Cabinet that a certain number of officials should remain in the civil administration of Egypt. But with what confidence would these be viewed by the Egyptians, when the British Government had formally renewed and confirmed the bonds which subjected Egypt to Turkish control? Without the British military occupation, and with Turkish influence reasserting itself, the efforts of the British element engaged in the civil administration of Egypt would have been paralysed. What use would have been made of disappointed Egyptian sentiment by other colonies, such as that of the French in Egypt? Nor would the return of the Turk have been regarded with less apprehension in the Palace than among humbler homes. The Khedive and his subjects, from their several points of view, would have contemplated it with equal repugnance. Throughout Egypt, the plan would have been hateful; and the responsibility of introducing it would have remained upon Great Britain.

The author of "The Story of the Khedivate" points to Lord Randolph Churchill, who at that time was in the Salisbury Cabinet, as the author of the scheme. Lord Randolph, he adds, mainly derived his views as to British policy in the East from Sir Henry Drummond Wolff. It was the latter who would seem to have suggested the despatch of an Envoy; the Envoy adopted, at Lord Randolph's instance, was the framer of the suggested scheme, who shortly after he started on his mission lost his seat for Portsmouth.

This may, or may not, be true, but it does not explain the adoption of the scheme by Lord Salisbury. Possibly



the revival of Egypt seemed of less importance to the Prime Minister than a good understanding with Turkey, the removal of a thorn from the side of France, and the relief which would be afforded to British military resources by the return of the British garrison of Egypt. Whatever may have been Lord Salisbury's point of view, it seems clear that in presence of Dervish rule in the Soudan, many years must have elapsed before external danger ceased, or before the fulfilment of British pledges could have been exacted. In that interval circumstances greatly altered; and the evacuation of Egypt, say, in 1900, after the recovery of the Soudan and the death of the Khalifa, would have been contemplated by the British public with feelings very different from those with which it might have been regarded in 1887. Yet whenever the bill fell due, it must, presumably, have been honoured.

The real remedy for all our difficulties in Cairo lay, as Lord Salisbury, in his despatch of 7th of August, admitted, not in the co-operation of the Sultan, but in the financial emancipation of Egypt. As that came about, all complications fell into the background; until at last, in 1904, France recognizing the inutility of her efforts further to oppose, sought compensation in other directions, and retired from the field in which since 1882 she had played an inglorious and unfruitful part. With the financial emancipation of Egypt, all, and more than all, that we hoped to obtain by diplomatic dealing with the Sultan has been conceded by the Great Powers. Our position in Egypt has received European sanction; and, if the Sultan is still dissatisfied, we must comfort ourselves with the reflection that nothing but the sacrifice of Egyptian and European interests would bring balm from Cairo to Constantinople. The incident may be dismissed with an expression of relief, as yet another danger disappears from the horizon; and with



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the pious hope that the Turk may never again be invited to re-establish his "legitimate position" in Cairo, under British auspices, to the discomfiture of human advancement.

In point of time we have been a little anticipating, for it was not till July, 1887, that Sir Henry Drummond Wolff left Constantinople. By that date many difficulties had been surmounted in Cairo, and the plea for the Convention had already lost much of whatever force it might ever have had. Internationalism in Egypt had been parried; the need for further appeal to the Powers for financial relief had been obviated; and the vitality of Egypt had begun to renew itself. The forces of order and method were everywhere at work; the Nile was in the control of competent and experienced men; there was an end to the chaos and bewilderment caused by the early, misdirected efforts of ill-informed officials. The Soudan, though still a menace, was betraying signs of weakness, and could be dealt with when the time was ripe. With the removal of the incubus of the proposed Convention, the last grave danger which hung over the making of modern Egypt disappeared, and the sinister shadow of Turkish preponderance which for a moment threatened to grow, and, under British approval, to overspread the whole land, was finally withdrawn.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE LABOURS OF SIR EDGAR VINCENT AND THE IRRIGATION AND MILITARY OFFICERS

Budgetary situation in Cairo in 1885 and 1886—Nubar Pasha's attitude—Abolition of *corvée*—Diplomatic opposition to financial measures proposed in connexion therewith—Protracted negotiations—Pension code—Commutations of pecuniary pensions into land—Tobacco duties—Irrigation—The Army.

WHILE the High Commissioners in conclave with the Khedive were planning the salvation of Egypt, it was being carried out without much reference to them, and possibly to some extent unknown to them, by the British officials in Cairo. In 1887 refund of the 5 per cent tax temporarily imposed on the coupons of the Public Debt would be demanded by the Powers. It would also be required of Egypt that she should resume, from 1887 onwards, payment of full interest on her debt, and of the sinking fund. If the stipulated payments could not be made, the floodgates of internationalism would again be opened. That meant failure; and failure was not in the programme. Nevertheless, there were few who at that time believed that payments would be duly resumed. But of these few, one was the Financial Adviser, and no one was likely to be better informed. The Alexandria branch of the Credit Lyonnais Bank, reviewing the situation in the early months of 1886, expressed the gravest doubts as to the financial prospects, denying to the Government even the credit of a clear and decided line of

action. The Credit Lyonnais was a French institution, and the wish may have been father to the thought. But Sir Evelyn Baring himself, writing in April, 1886, was not prepared to hazard an opinion on the subject. It was, he believed, possible that the Government might resume full payment in 1887, but it was not more than a possibility. So in spite of difficulties with the Ministries, regardless of the mordant remonstrances of Nubar Pasha, the Prime Minister, and unheeding of the obstruction caused to progress by the addition of a fifth wheel to the coach in the form of a High Commission, the Financial Adviser and the Agent stuck doggedly to their task. When the accounts for the year 1885 were closed they showed that the ordinary revenue of Egypt had amounted to £E.9,637,173; the gross expenditure debitable thereto was £E.9,268,326, leaving a nominal surplus of £E.368,847. Nominal, because this surplus was the result not of the year's working, but of certain readjustments in the accounts of 1885 and of preceding years. Moreover, under the system explained at page 124, very little of it would be carried to the credit of the Administration. There had been no indication of progressive revenue during 1885; which had been, in truth, a bad year. The country had suffered, not only from the general stagnation of trade which throughout Europe was causing depression, but from exhaustion caused by past events, by the struggle in the Soudan, and by the privation due to the long delay in the payment of indemnities. Yet there were not wanting some signs of promise. The Customs net receipts considerably exceeded the net estimates; the projected house-tax, after craving for more than three years recognition at the doors of all the chief foreign Ministries in Europe, had at last been made applicable to Europeans, though the rating had not yet been assessed. The accounts of the following

year—1886—showed an ordinary revenue of assigned and non-assigned receipts amounting to £E.9,574,393, and an expenditure in the year's accounts of £E.9,588,166, or a deficit of £E.13,773. An abnormally large sum of £E.250,000 in the revenue of 1886 had been received under a recently sanctioned project, on account of payments for exemption from military service. This item of receipt, though it swelled the revenues of 1886, was extremely fluctuating, and barely a tenth of it was expected in 1887. The net surplus accruing to the Government for the years 1885 and 1886, after settlement of the respective claims of the assigned and non-assigned revenues, amounted to no more than £E.22,848. But, little as it was, it was on the right side. The Government had paid its way; no fresh floating debt had been incurred. Nevertheless, there was no elasticity, so far, in the revenues. A single bad Nile might throw the Budget into deficit. The Soudan cloud was always threatening. Nor had the Credit Lyonnais been ill-informed when criticizing the attitude of the Government as wanting in clearness and decisiveness, for the head of the Ministry was using his influence to thwart and oppose the Financial Adviser. What were Nubar Pasha's motives we may have occasion at a later page to inquire. He must have known that the only way to balance revenue and expenditure was by adopting rigid measures of economy. The country was not able at the time to bear increased taxation. He could not doubt the penalty of failure. It is true that he was no financier; and possibly he was worried to death by departments clamouring for supplies. He wished, doubtless, to show results. He may have trusted to his own ingenuity and resource to extricate the Government from the results of further financial difficulties. Being, finally, as he was, a man of masterful and



unaccommodating character, he must have chafed at the foreign element in the Administration, and at the "masterful hand." There was friction between him and the Agent. The possibility of impending changes, foreshadowed by the presence of the High Commissioners, without doubt gave confidence to malcontents. They could support their protests against the policy actually adopted by pointing to the probabilities of relief from the existing regime so soon as the Anglo-Turkish Convention was completed. The masterful hand might then be removed, and a less rigidly economical era be inaugurated under the auspices of a sympathetic diplomatist. But there is neither pleasure nor profit in dwelling at present upon such speculations, nor on the incidents which led to them. They were but bubbles on the surface—at most, eddies which had no effect on the main stream. They are recalled only to show that the difficulties which lay in the path of progress were of many kinds, and came from many quarters; and that while fighting the French, preparing to renew the fight with the Khalifa, combating insolvency, and finding themselves overshadowed by the presence of the High Commissioners, Sir Evelyn Baring and Mr. Vincent had enemies in their own camp. That worst of all enemies, the familiar friend, had lifted up his heel against them. At a later date these differences became more acute, and led, as will be seen, to Nubar Pasha's resignation.

The struggle with deficit and floating debt was far from the only preoccupation of the Financial Adviser. Abolition of the yearly labour *corvée* was unceasingly pressed upon him both by Nubar Pasha and Colonel Scott Moncrieff. There was urgent need of bringing the pension list within the limits of the estimate adopted by the Convention of 1885, and of framing a new pension law. The Egyptian

retiring and compassionate pension law had always been unduly indulgent, and the abnormal number of applications caused by withdrawal from the Soudan had greatly swollen the demands for pensions. On the other hand, there was something further to be made out of the duty on tobacco. Reduction might also be effected in the strength of the Egyptian army.

Political difficulties, as usual, obstructed reform, when the abolition of the Nile *corvée* was attempted. Irrigation canals in Egypt had been from time immemorial made and kept open by forced labour. These canals are the arteries through which the life blood of Egypt, the Nile water, is distributed. Although labour in kind given to that end by those who are most concerned, that is, by the fellaheen, may not seem to be unreasonable, the burden was very unevenly distributed. Cultivators employed by rich or powerful men were not called out; those only were impressed who could not resist. Neither food nor shelter was given by the Government; while the *corvée* was summoned at a moment when the labour of the fellah was urgently needed on his own fields.

Until the commencement of the nineteenth century the land had yielded only one crop a year. This crop, sown as the Nile water receded in November, needed little attention till it was reaped in April. The fellah had not much to do at other seasons. He could not be better employed than in clearing out the short canals leading to his fields, and in strengthening the Nile embankments which protected him from inundation. But the introduction of cotton and of sugar-cane in the earlier years of the century changed matters. These crops require to be moderately watered at various times in the year. They must not be flooded during the high Nile; still less must they be left dry during low Nile. To meet their needs, a whole system

of low-level summer canals had to be dug deep enough to take in water in the lowest Nile. These canals were yearly choked with the mud deposit of the Nile flood. Their course had to be cleared for miles, the depth of silt being as great as from six feet to ten feet. The winter crops needed only the clearance of shallow canals left dry by the falling river, and were therefore easily and leisurely dug out. The clearance of a summer low-level canal was a very different matter. It had to be done under extreme pressure, because the canal must be closed during clearance and the valuable crops watered by it required irrigation. The bottom was never quite dry, and thousands of nearly naked men jostled against one another under a blazing sun at the bottom of long ditches full of mud and water, carrying baskets crammed with mud on their backs up the deep sides. Meanwhile, the labour of the fellah was urgently needed to hoe and weed his own fields; or possibly he might have been earning wages by working for some wealthier man. His more fortunate fellows were exempted from their share of what should have been common labour. The province of Gharbieh contains 813,000 acres. Of this area the large proprietors and the Wakf, or that department of the State which acts as trustee for religious endowments, own 102,224 acres, with a population of 21,000, not one of whom in the year 1884 went to the *corvée*, or paid a piastre of exemption money. In another province, whence no labour was sent to the *corvée*, were large proprietors possessed of 53,000 acres. In the same province peasant proprietors held 33,000 acres and furnished 800 men. The work required for the *corvée* yearly increased with the spread of cotton cultivation. The benefit of keeping their own lands tilled afforded yearly to the rich a greater inducement to evade the law, and to transfer their share of the common burden to the poor. The English engineers,



on arrival in the country in 1883 and 1884, set to work at once to modify the system ; indeed, from the hour when he took charge of his office, Colonel Scott Moncrieff carried on by pen, precept, and example incessant warfare against it. In 1884 the whole amount of work to be done according to the old system would have been about 63,000,000 cubic metres of earth excavation, an impossible task. But partial use of the barrage raised the water-surface. By this means, and by closing certain regulating bridges during the low Nile, which previously were only closed at high Nile, the necessity of digging the canals to the depth which would have been otherwise required was avoided. Recourse also was had to sums made available in that year, so that the total work done by the *corvée* in 1884 did not exceed 30,000,000 cubic metres of excavation. In the same year the unpaid *corvée* labour was equivalent to 165,000 men working for 100 days ; in 1885 it was reduced to the equivalent of 125,936 men ; in 1886 the equivalent had been reduced to 95,093. This saving of the labour of 70,000 men for 100 days was mainly due to the adoption of a system of cash commutation. But in part it was also to be ascribed to improvements introduced by engineering skill, by which much superfluous labour was dispensed with : and in a measure it was ascribable to the use made of the partly restored barrage.

Now, in the Budget Estimates which served as the basis of the Convention of 1885, and had been embodied in the Khedivial Decree of July 27th of that year, a reduction, or set-off, of £E.450,000 had been allowed in the estimates of land revenue receipts. It was calculated that the land revenue inscribed on the rolls annually exceeded by that amount the sum which should be levied, if due regard were had to the assets derived from land. The difference



between the amount of the revenue roll on the land registers and the actual sums credited to the Government, was due to the pressure of the assessment on certain provinces of Upper Egypt; the relief of this pressure was the object of the deduction of £E.450,000 from the estimates. In giving effect to this reduction the Government decided, in 1886, to reduce the land tax in the poorest districts to the extent of £E.200,000, but to continue to levy from the land-owners the balance of £E.250,000, in order to utilize the sum in part payment of labour on the canals which had been hitherto supplied by the *corvée*. The *corvée* was regarded as taxation in kind, and the unpaid labourer as needing more relief than the landed proprietor. It was further arranged that any labourer liable to the *corvée* could redeem himself by paying a fixed sum of 40 piastres (say 8 shillings) in the richer districts and 20 piastres, or 4 shillings, in the low rice-growing districts. The ransom had to be paid by the 1st of April of each year.

It had been at first proposed to devote as much as £E.346,000 to the relief of the *corvée*. But Mr. Vincent had doubts as to whether so large a sum could continue to be levied from the proprietors of overburdened lands, whose relief would thus be indefinitely postponed. Other obligatory claims, too, had to be considered; and it might lead to much embarrassment if so large a sum were earmarked. The authorities in London were, for their part, anxious lest in their desire to relieve unpaid labour the Egyptian Government might be expending revenues which would be required to meet expenditure authorized by the Convention of 1885. But Nubar Pasha and Colonel Scott Moncrieff alike pleaded importunately for the necessity of relief, and it was decided in 1886 to make a commencement on the basis of £E.250,000.

Then began diplomatic difficulties which for more than three years kept the ratification of the measure in suspense. The French Commissioner of the Caisse questioned its legality, and his opposition was endorsed by the French and other Consuls-General in Cairo. The assembled diplomatic corps of Egypt shook their heads, like Lord Burleigh: pleased, possibly, that mischief should be found for their otherwise idle hands to do, and assuredly not displeased that Great Britain should be the victim. Doubt was thrown on the assertion that £E.450,000 had been provisionally deducted from the estimates of realizable land revenue. When that objection proved groundless, the right of the Egyptian Government to make the necessary addition of £E.250,000 to the "authorized expenditure" of the Convention of 1885, without previous consent of the Powers who were parties to that Convention, was hotly contested. It was not till the spring of 1887, when the Emperor of Russia had been personally approached on the subject by his Chancellor, M. de Giers, who in turn used his good offices with the French Government, that opposition began to lessen. Meanwhile, however, by agreement with the Caisse, the measure had been provisionally put into force; and, subject to ultimate adjustment, the sum of £E.250,000 had been added to the authorized expenditure. Eventually, the proposal received international sanction; but it was June 14th, 1889, before the Khedivial Decree could issue "with the assent of the Powers." Nothing would be more ludicrous, were it less painful, than this spectacle of the case of the Egyptian fellah being carried to the Czar, and by his instructions pleaded before the President of the French Republic; while Great Britain, obstructed in her errand of humanity, looks on in helpless inaction, and trembles to be arrested in the

discharge of the trust committed to her, on a plea of misappropriation of funds.

A commencement was thus made, which, in the course of three years, led to the complete disuse of forced labour for purposes of canal clearing. The *corvée* on a limited scale, and in a very altered form, is still temporarily employed, for the purpose of watching and reporting any danger to the banks of canals during the period of high Nile. Thus, in 1903, 11,244 men were called out for a hundred days for this purpose. But they were employed in their several villages through which the canals in question ran, solely for the purpose of giving warning of danger to their own fields. Use of the field telephone will further reduce the number necessary for this purpose. A paid *corvée* is also from time to time employed for a short time in emergencies such as locust plague, or for the destruction of the cotton worm.

In the disuse of the canal *corvée*, and of the *kurbash*, Great Britain has established strong claims on the gratitude of the poorer class of Egyptian. But the sense of favours conferred proverbially lives longer in the memory of giver than of receiver. In respect of public benefits, and in dealing with masses who are alien in blood, in religion, in customs, and in colour, gratitude is more than usually evanescent. With the generations that have suffered, the memory of suffering dies. No greater mistake could be made by Great Britain, whether in regard to Egypt or to India, than to build upon the shifting sands of gratitude a fancied superstructure of goodwill; still less, an imposing fabric of loyalty. The choicest gifts of alien rulers are often the least remembered; and irritation caused by the presence of a foreign body goes far to outweigh in the national mind the sense of any benefit accompanying it.



The effects of the Egyptian pension code on the jealously adjusted revenues and expenditure of Egypt caused much anxiety in those days of early struggle. The sum provided for pensions in the Budget of the London Convention was £E.437,000. In the Estimates for 1886 the figure had risen to £E.464,000. But claims for annuities amounting to another £E.61,200 were awaiting disposal. If the heirs of officers and officials killed in the Soudan were to be granted the full pensions claimable, a further annual increase of £E.26,676 must be looked for, while arrears on account of such pensions amounted by the close of March, 1886, to not less than £E.52,000. The total charge on pension account would thus mount to considerably more than £E.600,000, or £E.163,000 above the Convention Estimate. In the loan of £9,000,000, however, had been included a sum of £550,000 for commutation of pensions; and it was arranged that, as far as that sum would go, lands available within the area of the Daira and Domains Administrations should be assigned at a valuation to pensioners willing to take them in lieu of cash. Further loan capital became available later, and the assumed value of pensions commuted was largely increased.

To anticipate a little, by the close of 1887 3632 pensions, of an annual value of £E.220,822, had been commuted for a sum of £E.2,621,744, the amount of Government land which had been disposed of being 108,235 acres. A revised pension code guards against the continuance of abnormal pension charges such as had been brought about by the careless liberality of former rulers, by the facility with which pensions had been obtained through "superior order," and by the calamity which had deluged the Soudan with the blood of Egyptian garrisons, and had flooded the pension lists with the names and claims of widows and orphans. Yet after all the commutations



effected, we find Sir Vincent Corbet writing in December, 1904, that "the pension charge for 1905 reaches a total of £E.425,000, or an increase of £E.9000. The state of the pension laws is highly unsatisfactory: the charge is a heavy one, while the scale, in some respects at least, is far from liberal. The question is one that can only be dealt with, as past failures show, with the utmost caution, and after careful study. It is occupying the attention of the Government."

It has been mentioned that by an important Convention with Greece, carried out in 1884 at the instance of the Financial Adviser, the introduction into Egypt of Greek tobacco, which had been hitherto prohibited, was permitted. This Convention was the turning-point in the revenue derived from tobacco, and was not the least of the services rendered by Mr. Vincent to Egypt. The smuggling business referred to in a previous page now ceased; and Greek tobacco henceforth contributed its due share to the revenue. In April, 1885, the duty on imported tobacco was raised from 5 to 12 piastres (1 piastre =  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.) the oke ( $2\frac{3}{4}$  lb.). The duty paid on imported Greek and Turkish tobacco was considerably higher than that levied on native-grown tobacco. Native tobacco being thus protected, was mixed with foreign tobacco. Though the area to be planted with native tobacco was limited by past decrees, the law was evaded, and its cultivation largely increased. A mixture of native and Turkish tobacco was sold in Egypt, and exported to Europe, as genuine Turkish tobacco. The consumer of Egyptian cigarettes complained of the inferior quality of what were sold as Egyptian cigarettes, so that there was risk of an important trade being lost to Egypt. Importers of foreign tobacco cried out that the interests which they represented were suffering. The Turkish Government were inclined to

hint that Egypt's handling of the tobacco question was not in accordance with the spirit or text of the Sultan's firmans. The Egyptian Customs were also losing revenue, as the increased production and consumption of inferior native tobacco, mixed with the Turkish leaf, checked the import of the foreign article. It was therefore desired to bring the tax on native tobacco up to a rate slightly less than the rate charged on imported tobacco. It will be found that a little later the culture of tobacco was wholly prohibited in Egypt.

It would be beyond the scope of this volume to give in any detail the operations of the Irrigation Department during the three years 1885, 1886, 1887. They were, in part, years of experiment; partly of confident progress. The work before the officers was fourfold. They had to perfect the means of making the whole discharge of the river in summer available for irrigation: to this end they restored the barrage. They had to secure a just and economical distribution of water; this was matter of administration rather than of construction. They had to provide drainage facilities to carry off excess water in the flood and winter seasons; and finally they were called upon to afford security from inundation in flood seasons. These were duties with which experience in India had familiarized them. The irrigation officers had been all trained in the Indian school, which expects its men to be out and about on circuit within the area of their several charges all the year round, without regard to climate, temperature, or physical ease. The Indian system, further, insists on irrigation officers exerting themselves to the utmost to gain the entire confidence and respect of landed proprietors and cultivators. These habits and this tradition Colonel Scott Moncrieff and his subordinates

brought with them ; and their success in Egypt is largely due to their early training on the Ganges and the Jumna canals. The Irrigation Department, mainly from the nature of its duties, but in great measure from the efficiency with which they have been performed, has secured the confidence of Egyptians in a degree much exceeding that which is felt in other departments. But its officers were fortunate in being allowed to deal directly with the people. There was no go-between to misrepresent or to mislead ; they brought with them the promise and, in due course, the fulfilment of plenty ; they took away the excess of water which lay upon undrained lands, producing malaria and fever. Above all, at a time when every other department was in want of funds, the Irrigation Department had the command of money. Of the million granted in the summer of 1885 by the Convention of that year, £E.114,475 had been spent up to the close of 1886 ; in 1887 a further sum of £E.343,296 was expended. The chief work had been the continuation of the strengthening of the barrage ; and the commencement of the Rayah Tewfikieh, a great trunk canal starting from the east end of the barrage. For the rest, the building of regulators and locks for purposes of water-distribution, the carrying out of improvements in drainage, and the prosecution of dredging in substitution for the corvée, had taken up the irrigation officers' attention. Efforts had been also made to induce the village sheikhs, or headmen, to contract for clearing out their own village canals, in substitution for the corvée. A staff of native Egyptian irrigation engineers was being carefully trained. Unhappily the annual employment of the £E.250,000 assigned to the relief of the corvée was found to be tied down with restrictions, imposed under diplomatic pressure, which robbed the grant of much of its value. It often happened, for example,



that the introduction of a set of regulating sluices enabled such a control to be exercised over the water in a canal that silt was no longer deposited, and the *corvée* was no longer necessary to remove it. But as masonry works could not have been made by *corvée* labour alone, the irrigation officers were not in a position to devote to such works any of the £E.250,000 which had been given as its equivalent; and instead of laying out, perhaps, £E.500 once for all, they were obliged to continue spending as much year after year in removing silt. Similar cases frequently occurred in Upper Egypt, where embankments were yearly washed away by the lap of the water. Had the irrigation officers been allowed to spend any of the £E.250,000 in facing such banks with stone, the annual outlay on repairs would have been saved. But as this might not be done without bringing down upon Egypt the Great Powers of Europe and making an international question of it, money had to be provided for annual repairs.

The strength of the Egyptian army was necessarily affected by the course of affairs beyond the southern frontier. By the close of 1886, 3000 men had been brought under reduction, of whom some were drafted into the constabulary. The Convention Budget had limited expenditure on army account to £E.130,000. The Estimates for 1888 provided for £E.292,000, exclusive of the frontier forces employed at Suakin. The strength of the force to be entertained at this cost was 9631, or an average cost of £E.31 per man. But until the Khalifa was disposed of, the strength of the Egyptian forces could not be a fixed quantity. Another decade was to elapse before material and permanent relief could be hoped for in the Army Estimates.

In June, 1886, a decree had issued permitting all who



were subject to conscription to purchase at their option exemption from military service. Exemption might be obtained by the payment of £E.40, if made prior to appearing before the Commissioner for drawing lots; by payment of £E.50 after the lot was drawn, but before issue of summons to join the colours; and finally, by payment of £E.100, under certain limitations, after joining the colours, at any period of the prescribed military service. Conscripts would not be called up before their twenty-third year; there would always be some 150,000 conscripts on the lists, varying between the ages of nineteen and twenty-three. The number of recruits required yearly to replace the wastage in an army of 12,000 men (the gross number required at that time for all service, within and without the Egyptian frontier) was found not to exceed from 1200 to 1500 men. The period of service comprised four years with the colours, four in the police, and four in the reserve; active work, therefore, it may be said, was limited to eight years, four of which would be within the frontiers of Egypt proper. Soudanese resident in Egypt were subject to the laws of conscription, but men direct from the Soudan were preferred. These were mainly volunteers, whose ranks, from time to time, were largely recruited by desertion from the Khalifa.

Surgeon-Major (now Sir John) Rogers has left on record some curious experiences in regard to recruiting in the early days of the Anglo-Egyptian army, of which he was Principal Medical Officer. Rumour had it that in time of conscription no less than £E.1500 monthly would find its way, by unacknowledged channels, into the head recruiting office. On one occasion a sum of £E.2000 was offered to the recruiting officer. In the end of 1883 and beginning of 1884 it was a common occurrence to find on the Principal Medical Officer's writing-table a small brown-paper parcel,

with a name written on it. The parcel might contain from £5 to £30. In 1884 batches of conscripts were daily examined in numbers of 200 to 300. Before examination, each conscript subscribed to a pool, at the rate of about £E1. 10s. a head; those who were rejected, left their money behind them in the hands of minor officers and officials; those who were passed in received their money back from the pool. All this was put an end to by the close of 1884.

The long and patient work of Sir Evelyn Wood and Sir Francis Grenfell began, in course of time, to show good results. The composite force of Egyptians and Soudanese might now, without anxiety, be put in line with British troops. Hitherto they had been placed mainly on lines of communication; but in 1887 the defence of the southern frontier was wholly entrusted to them. The first Soudan battalion had been raised in May, 1884, and was designated the "9th Soudanese." In January, 1886, another battalion, the "10th Soudanese," and in 1887 a third, "the 11th Soudanese," were enrolled. They were, as has been said, largely composed of deserters from the Khalifa, and had been known among the Dervishes as the Bazingers. In 1886 the Egyptian army was composed of ten battalions of infantry, five batteries of artillery, a regiment of cavalry (of two squadrons), and three camel corps. Writing in the close of 1886, General Grenfell expressed his surprise at the great improvement of the Egyptian soldiers of the frontier force since his last inspection. The men seemed contented and happy, and to have taken to soldiering as a profession. They turned out clean and smart, and were steady in drill and in general of soldierly appearance. The scouting of the cavalry and camel corps particularly struck the British commander. The spirit which animated their officers had communicated itself to the men.

By what spirit those officers were animated the records of the fighting in the Soudan sufficiently show. But what good fellows they were, and of what stuff they were made, may be even better gathered from an incident which occurred in 1887. Reductions were being carried out that year with a view to greater economy in the Egyptian army; and, in order to facilitate the object aimed at, Colonel Kitchener offered to give up his command pay of £E.800. Colonel Hallam Parr, then Adjutant-General of the Egyptian army, pressed the Sirdar to allow him to relinquish £E.200 per annum; other officers of less prominent position offered smaller sums, according to their rank. "I have had the most generous offers," wrote General Grenfell, "from officers who really could not afford it. If I had considered them overpaid I should certainly have accepted, but I knew that Hallam Parr was actually out of pocket; he so constantly entertains the native officers; and none of them are making fortunes." Colonel Hallam Parr was one of the officers most identified with the making of the new Egyptian army, and the pride that he took in its success was as creditable to him as to the Egyptian soldiers. He claimed equal honour for all, for Egyptian no less than black; in the defence of Magraket there were no black troops; at Ginnis, of the whole force of Egyptian troops engaged, 150 only were blacks. When, on the appearance of 4000 Dervishes at Magraket, Major Besant called for volunteers to meet them from his little body of 300 Egyptians, his whole force, officers and men, stepped forward. When Colonel Hallam Parr's battalion had only been formed a year, on the news of the El Teb disaster he called for ten volunteers to go with him to Suakin as drill instructors. As soon as it was known that the Colonel and the Major of the Battalion were going, 150 men volunteered, "and I could have taken my



whole battalion had it been so required." The confidence expressed by Colonel Hallam Parr was by no means confined to that gallant officer. The spirit of enthusiasm, infused by Sir Evelyn Wood into his staff from the beginning, burned brightly under his successors. The good feeling was reciprocated by native officers and men; from the mud of the Nile there had been created a virile fighting force. As time passes, and when the comradeship of actual war no longer draws the two races together, let us trust that this good feeling may remain unimpaired. The British have not always the reputation of handling Eastern races with much show of sympathy. "*Les Anglais sont justes, mais ils ne sont pas bons,*" was the verdict some years ago of an Indian to Count Goblet D'Alviella, the Belgian traveller. In civil and in social life it may be so; in military life this defect in the national character is less marked. In India, in Africa, in China, British officers and native soldiers work well together. Egypt has been but one of many similar cases. The canker of a long peace, or the preference of good officers for more promising fields of action, may prove less favourable to the future of the Egyptian army than did the rough experiences of Soudan warfare, and the stirring life on the Egyptian frontier. It will be well, in such cases, if the traditions be preserved and followed which were handed down by the group of distinguished officers, to whose force and charm of character, and to whose untiring energy and tact, the modern Egyptian army owes whatever value it possesses. The present Sirdar, Sir Reginald Wingate, has been for many years connected with that army; as long as he remains in office, the Egyptian soldier is in safe hands.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE KHALIFA'S DREAMS—PAYMENT OF THE SUSPENDED COUPONS

Projected invasion of Egypt by the Khalifa—His letter to the Queen-Empress—His visions—Wad Baghdáwi—Payment of the suspended coupons, and resumption of payment in full—Financial results of 1887—Mr. Vincent's arrangement with the Caisse, as to the Sinking Fund—Settlement of the claims of ex-Khedive Ismail—Gradual improvement in the finances.

IN spite of more or less continuous but indecisive fighting in the neighbourhood of Suakin, there was, on the whole, a pause in military operations during the latter half of 1885 and throughout 1886. Very soon after the retirement of the British force from Metemmeh and the evacuation in June, 1885, of Dongola, it became clear that the Khalifa, emboldened by the British retreat, was preparing for the invasion of Egypt. His advance guard was defeated on December 30th, 1885, at Ginnis, between Dongola and Wadi Halfa, where the Egyptian troops first gave evidence of the effects of their training under British officers. The subsequent retirement, however, of all Egyptian troops to Wadi Halfa, where the Egyptian frontier was now fixed, gave fresh encouragement to the Khalifa. But for a revolt in the Darfur province, the invasion of Egypt would have been attempted in 1886. The Dervishes made, indeed, a half-hearted demonstration in the latter half of that year, but retreated when pressed by Egyptian troops. Wad el Najúmi, the conqueror of Hicks at El Obeid and the successful captor of Khartum, was

now charged with the invasion of Egypt. He remained watchful at Dongola. In 1887 his advance guard was repulsed at Sarras. This was the first action fought by Egyptian troops independently of support, and its issue gave increased confidence both to officers and men. In the Eastern Soudan, Tamai, near Suakin, was recaptured, with many guns and rifles and much ammunition, by the friendly tribe of Amarars on October 7th, 1886. Later, in 1887, the Dervish forces returned to Sarras and occupied it, awaiting at the close of that year the Khalifa's orders to advance northward, where their master had promised them the spoil of Egypt.

But they were no longer Dervishes, or, as that word would imply, religious mendicants, who are rich only in sanctity. As the Khalifa, in pursuance of an edict of the late Mahdi, and in imitation of the founder of Islam, willed it, they were known as the Helpers, the "Ansár." On the departure of Wad el Najúmi to take command of the Army of the North—"Commander-in-Chief of the Forces destined for Egypt" was his title—the Khalifa Abdullah had convoked the other Khalifas and all the Amirs. Stretching out their hands in the direction of Cairo, the assembled chiefs three times solemnly testified to the all-prevailing might of Allah. Then the Khalifa Abdullah, calling to them in a loud voice, had thus addressed them: "O Ansár! fear not for the fight for the land of Egypt; you will suffer much at the battle of Assouan, after which the whole land of Egypt will fall into your hands; O Ansár! you will also suffer much at the battle of Mecca, after which the whole country will be yours."<sup>1</sup>

The Khalifa Abdullah, it must be admitted, had a ready tongue, a powerful gift of prophecy, and a never-failing facility of dreaming. He had addressed, among

<sup>1</sup> Wingate's "Mahdiism and the Egyptian Soudan," p. 282.

other potentates, Her Majesty the late Queen-Empress, recapitulating, from the Omdurman point of view, the events of the last four years. ". . . Thus hast thou erred in many ways, and art suffering great loss, wherefrom there is no refuge for thee save by turning to God the King, and entering among the people of Islam, and the followers of the Mahdi, grace be upon him. . . . I am a weak servant, and there is no strength in me alone. In God is my refuge, in Him is my trust, and He has promised His aid to those who trust in Him and seek asylum with Him. . . . The forelock of all kings is in the hands of God. . . . And thou, if thou wilt not yield to the command of God, and enter among the people of Islam and the followers of the Mahdi (grace be upon him), come thyself and thy armies and fight with the host of God ; and if thou wilt not come, then be ready in thy place ; for at His pleasure and in the time that He shall will it, the hosts of God will raze thy dwelling, and let thee taste of sorrow, because thou hast turned away from the path of the Lord ; for therein is sufficiency."

This combination of politics and prophecy is effective. The dialectics of the Khalifa were such as might be used by a Prime Minister, and a Pope, in council. Though the Khalifa fought as vigorously as he wrote, for there is nothing like a spear-head to point an argument, he reserved, as the most potent weapon in his armoury, an unlimited power of dreaming dreams and seeing visions. After the death of the Mahdi he dreamed to a degree at which he was himself amazed. At a little later date there had arisen one who declared himself to be Nabi Isa, or the Prophet Jesus. The Muhammadan believes that the Nabi Isa is to reappear towards the end of the world. The arrival, therefore, of this prophet, rightly considered, was testimony to the claims of the Khalifa ; for, as Islam

will have it, the Nabi Isa is to follow on the coming of the Mahdi. But Abdullah, who judged otherwise, could no more stomach a false prophet than Dame Quickly could abide a swaggerer. The world, moreover, was too much with him; and the end of it was as yet by no means desired of him. So Nabi Isa was disposed of; and when his head adorned the door of Abdullah's mosque, the Khalifa had a surfeit of visions. On the 7th of December, 1887, he records one of them. The False Prophet, and the principal Amirs who had believed in him, were thrust down, like Dante's political enemies in the "Inferno," into various grades of hell. There he saw them, and thus he described them: "The false pretender was at an unseen depth; a great noise was heard from the direction in which he was, accompanied by shouts and yells. Wad Baghdáwi was at a still greater depth, nearly at the bottom of Hell. . . . But Kanwa, Abu Afdali, Abdullah el Gamus, and others of the believers, were suffered to appear and disappear at intervals out of the depths of Hell. All were under the charge of black persons who tortured them in various degrees. . . . They are still falling down into the depths of Hell, nor have they yet reached the bottom."

The faces of the torturers when turned towards Abdullah were radiant and dazzling, but became black as night when they bent over their victims. The little touch of genius in this alternate radiancy and gloom, the sweetness and light reflected from the blessed Khalifa's countenance on the instruments of wrath, the suggestion of the unbelievers for ever and ever falling, prove Abdullah to have been no mean artist. The curious may amuse themselves by comparing the still-falling Wad Baghdáwi with the *sedet æternumque sedebit* of the Roman poet; the whole vision, indeed, may be contrasted with Virgil's presentment of the pains of Tartarus. Moved by the cries of the sufferers



the Khalifa joined his prayers to theirs, but learned that as they did not die in the religion of Islam, and were not faithful to the Khalifa, they would never be forgiven, nor could their punishment ever be lightened. Naturally, the effect of his visions on those to whom they were disclosed was stimulating. Wad Baghdáwi was an object lesson. On the eve of the battle of Omdurman the Khalifa dreamed uninterruptedly, and beheld the souls of the faithful, who were killed, rising to Paradise, while legions of Hell were seen tearing into shreds the spirits of the infidels. The white figures which lay stark and still in their thousands on the 2nd of September, 1898, on the field of Omdurman, had entered it that morning sustained by these fervid assurances of their Master. What were the dreams of the Khalifa in his last troubled sleep, on the eve of the fateful 24th of November, 1899, few of his Ansár survived to tell.

But in Cairo there was no dreaming. There the Ansár, the accredited helpers of the British Agent, were not to be moved by visions, though their chief should have assured them that the French member of the Caisse was even now on the verge of the bottomless pit; or that shouts and yells might be heard, by ears attuned to ghostly cadence, from the direction of the French Agency. If the forces of the Khalifa were approaching from the South, it was from the North that there was more imminent danger. The financial crisis was due in April, 1887, under penalty of the spoil of Egypt. Before the fateful day could arrive, even in March of that year, the arrears of interest were liquidated, and it was announced that payment of full interest was resumed. Mr. Vincent tells us that this announcement was generally regarded as presumptuous,

and as putting too heavy a strain on the finances of the country. In 1887 the revenue accruing from ordinary sources had risen to £E.9,616,358; the ordinary, that is, the "authorized," expenditure included in the accounts fell to £E.9,172,581, leaving the State, after the closing of its accounts with the Caisse, a net surplus of only £E.45,942. It was a surplus which gave little evidence of vitality, for it was due to changes in book-keeping. Salaries had been hitherto paid in Egypt on the last day of the month for which they were due. They would be paid in future on the first of the ensuing month. Eleven months only, therefore, were debited to 1887, and £E.200,000 was passed on to 1888. The annual deficits in land revenue payments by the Daira and Domains Administrations were now, for the first time, also, so dealt with as to throw the burden (£E.140,000 in this case) on to the year in which the accounts of those administrations were closed, being a date subsequent to the closing of the State accounts; subsequent, therefore, to the closing of 1887, and falling into the year 1888. All this, though perfectly admissible from the point of view of the accountant, looks to the uninitiated very like juggling. The financial augurs, we imagine, somewhat smiled as they looked obliquely into one another's eyes. But they had the courage of their conviction that all would yet be well. With the resumption of payment of the full coupons, Egypt was again, for the time being, solvent. It was impossible to pretend that no anxiety need be felt for the future. But they were right who proclaimed that the acute crisis of the long financial disease was over. The sum of £E.340,000, above dealt with, formed the commencement of a Government reserve fund. There was thus available a considerable cash balance. The irrigation engineers, moreover, were beginning to make their efforts

felt. There was a lull, temporarily, in the costly operations in the Soudan.

In round figures the expenses of the Egyptian Government might be taken, as matters stood, at £E.4,700,000; while the tribute of Turkey, the Non-Consolidated Debt, and certain other charges, amounted annually to £E.1,300,000; say, a total of £E.6,000,000. The full charge for the Consolidated Debt was £E.3,600,000, giving a total outgoing of £E.9,600,000. This was about equivalent to the annual revenue of the three preceding years. If as yet there was little sign of expansion, it might be contended that equilibrium had been at least maintained. By the Convention of 1885, one half of the surplus was to be devoted to the Sinking Fund; the other half, after adjustment, being passed on to the Special Reserve Fund of the Government. But, by an arrangement effected in 1888 through Mr. Vincent and the Caisse, subsequently sanctioned by the Powers, and embodied in a Khedivial Decree of July 12th of that year, it had been arranged that the Sinking Fund should be suspended unless and until the general reserve fund, the accumulations of which remained in the hands of the Caisse, as the result of its half-share in the surplus, amounted to two millions sterling. When the reserve fell short of that sum, it might be utilized, subject to a minimum balance of £E.800,000, in meeting extraordinary expenditure outside the limits of "authorized" expenditure prescribed in 1885, provided that such extraordinary expenditure had been previously approved by the Caisse. When the General Reserve Fund exceeded two millions, the surplus would be devoted to the Sinking Fund. This General Reserve Fund was freely drawn upon in subsequent years, both for expenditure and for advances on account, agreed to by the Caisse, the latter being repayable by the Government. It acted as a safety-valve

to the relief of pressure on the State, when, as time passed, and circumstances improved, demands from one or other of the administrations for increased supplies were too well founded to be refused. The year 1888 showed an ordinary revenue of £E.9,661,436; the authorized expenditure included in the accounts being £E.9,553,412. A surplus of £E.91,856 accrued to the Government after settlement with the Caisse. The reserve fund in the hands of the Caisse had now grown to £E.600,000, while the Special Reserve Fund of the Government, which was the sum of its own half-share of each year's surplus, after all adjustments had been effected, and when the accounts of the year had been finally closed, amounted to £E.160,000; so that the total reserve available in case of unforeseen calamity was not less than £E.760,000. There was comfort in this reserve fund, small as it was; for the Government, at last, had once again a balance to its credit with its bankers. The reign of rigid economy was nevertheless prolonged. Owing to a bad Nile, and to temporary increase in the army, it was decided, among other measures, to grant no increase to salaries during 1889; a decision which must have tempered official regrets at the approaching departure of Mr. Vincent.

With the consent of the Commissioners of the Caisse, the sum of £E.2,000,000 was borrowed in the course of 1888 in order to provide compensation for allowances to the ex-Khedivial family. The ex-Khedive Ismail, and certain members of his family, had made claims, after their removal from Egypt, amounting to about £E.4,500,000. These claims were for the value of crops standing on the Khedivial Domains in 1878 at the time they were handed over to the State (£E.364,000); for arrears of allowances (£E.1,050,000); and for the value of various lands and palaces, with their contents (£E.3,030,000).



The demand was exclusive of the future payment of the allowance which Ismail Pasha and his family claimed in perpetuity for themselves and their descendants. These grandiose demands, conceived in the true spirit of the ex-Khedive, were subsequently reduced to more reasonable limits. Allowances to the extent of £E.86,473 per annum were commuted into lands of the Domains, valued at £E.1,210,000; but of this sum an amount not exceeding £E.180,000 might be claimed in cash. At the true commercial value of the lands this capital sum was equal to about twelve and a half years' purchase. £E.100,000 was paid down in settlement of claims for crops; the Khedive's palaces at Emerghyian and two of the Cairo palaces were left in his hands. Ismail Pasha, and the other parties to this agreement, in consideration of the settlement thus effected, formally abandoned all further claims for themselves and for their descendants. The loan, which was raised to enable the Government to carry out this settlement, was of the nominal value of £2,330,000 and carried interest at 4 per cent, producing about £E.2,162,000; of which so much as was not expended in settling the claims of the Khedive and his family, was mainly devoted to purchase of land in commutation of pensions. £E.1,030,000 was paid in purchase of Domains lands for that purpose, and a corresponding portion of the Domains loan, then standing at 5 per cent, was paid off.

## CHAPTER XIII

### RETIREMENT OF MR. VINCENT—RESIGNATION OF NUBAR PASHA—POLICE AND TRIBUNALS

Remissions of taxation—Mr. Vincent's retirement—His views on the financial position—Mr. Palmer appointed Financial Adviser—Resignation of Nubar Pasha—His characteristics—Difficult position of British officials—Nubar and Riyaz unsuitable to changed circumstances—General Baker and Mr. Clifford Lloyd's schemes of Police—Brigandage Commission—Analogy of India.

THE year 1889 marks the close of the third phase in the general progress of Egypt since 1883, and the end of the first of the three periods into which its financial life may be divided. The first was from 1883 to 1889, a period of closest economy; the second, from 1890 to 1896, was marked similarly by economy, but was devoted also to remission of taxation. After 1896 came the turn of the departments, which had waited for eleven years for the funds required to better them. As early as July, 1889, for the first time since the Comptrollers, in 1880 and 1881, had brought about the abolition of various small and vexatious items of taxation, measures of financial relief were again adopted by the Government. The price of salt was reduced by 20 per cent in the two northern provinces of Egypt, and in fifteen towns of Upper Egypt the octroi and other small duties were abolished. The provinces to be relieved were those which had suffered most from the low Nile of that year. They were also more or less in contact with the Dervishes, and it was desirable to study and conciliate them.

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In the course of 1889, Mr. Vincent left the country where for six years he had done eminent service. Like Moses, he had led his people out of the house of bondage to the border of the promised land. Revolt had dogged his footsteps; incessant clamouring for substantial comforts had strained his patience to breaking-point. The record of Mr. Vincent's remarks on the Budget of 1889 is of peculiar interest; for, after the fashion of the blessing of the son of Amram before he ascended Nebo, they sum up the results of his administration, while they place before us in few words the situation as he left it, with an accurate forecast of a future which he was not, himself, permitted to see. "Not only has full payment been made," he wrote, of the suspended coupons, "without disturbing financial equilibrium, but a considerable reserve fund, amounting to over £E.500,000, has been created. No floating debt has been incurred, and no extraordinary measures have been taken to increase the taxation of the country. The agricultural taxpayer is admittedly in a better position than at any recent period of Egyptian history. The corvée has been greatly diminished, and several small taxes of obnoxious character have been removed." Then, mentioning the bad Nile, and the temporary increase to the army, he continues, "The stability of Egyptian finance is therefore subjected to a new ordeal. The years 1887-8 have clearly proved that, under normal circumstances, Egypt is a perfectly solvent country. The year of 1889 will prove, if the Budget estimates are realized, that exceptional difficulties can be surmounted without fear of a deficit; and I may state my conviction that it would require a succession of bad years to place the present financial position in any serious peril. Disappointing as it may be for those connected with Egyptian finance to find that the period of tension and

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difficulty is to be prolonged for another year, we may, I think, take heart of grace, and reflect that our exceptional misfortunes have revealed unexpected strength and elasticity." After a few further words, and after emphasizing the importance of increasing the Reserve Fund, he concludes, "Looking still further forward, I believe that we may with confidence anticipate the gradual reduction of expenditure on administration, pensions, and military charges; while the extension of the cultivated area, which must result from improved irrigation, will undoubtedly lead to a gradual increase of revenue. Provided that order and tranquillity be maintained, and that the financial administration be conducted with intelligence and moderation, I see no reason to depart from the opinion I have held for the last five years as to the solvency of Egypt." The people, like Israel after the loss of their first leader, would then dwell in safety alone; their fountain, like that of Jacob, would be upon a land of corn and wine, and their heavens would drop down dew.

Mr. Vincent was succeeded by Mr. (afterwards Sir Elwin) Palmer, at that time head of the Accounts Department. Mr. Palmer had belonged to the Indian Financial Department, and his services had been lent in the course of 1885 to Egypt, where he had proved himself very competent.

In June, 1888, the year preceding the departure of Sir Edgar Vincent from Cairo, Nubar Pasha had resigned office, and Riyaz Pasha had succeeded him. More than five years previously, when no Egyptian Minister would assume responsibility for the evacuation of the Soudan, Nubar had come to the rescue of the Agent. His term of office had corresponded with the period of greatest anxiety and stress. To Nubar, with his love of popular esteem, and his wish to manage matters in his own way, his Ministry must have brought with it no little disappoint-



ment. It was hard that, on the eve of the country's revival, he should be called on to relinquish the government. But his relations with the Agent, and, indeed, with the principal British officials, had become impossible. The prestige which had grown round him in former years, the influence he had acquired in the country, his long connexion with public life, combined with his personal characteristics, unsuited him to enter into any partnership in Egyptian administration in which he was not the dominant figure. The financial policy of the British officials had added to the irksomeness of his position. Rigid economy swathed the Minister in inflexible bands, leaving him little to do but to carry on current administration. On his head primarily centred all dissatisfaction; and in his ears were poured all the thousand and one grievances which foreign methods, and the zeal and inexperience of foreign officials, brought necessarily in their train. He had all the annoyances, and, save the emoluments, few of the sweets of office. But Nubar Pasha was a wealthy man, to whom salary was of small importance. He had threatened resignation in 1884. In 1888 further differences of opinion on the subject which had caused the crisis of 1884—namely, the most suitable method of police administration—brought matters to a final issue. General Valentine Baker, who had been head of the police since he had organized it in 1883, died in the course of 1888, and Nubar Pasha unsuccessfully seized the opportunity of removing the police from direct British authority. But, in truth, the police was only one of many stumbling-blocks. The questions involved covered wider ground than the handling of constabulary. The real issue between Nubar Pasha and the Agency was the question of control over the whole system of Egyptian administration. To that question there could be but one answer, and Lord Granville



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had expressed it in his despatch of January 4th, 1884. Sir Evelyn Baring and his fellow-workers were in Egypt, not to ensure solvency only, nor to tender to the Khedive and his Ministers counsels which might or might not, at their option, be followed. They had to look to London no less than to Cairo; and to consult more than one body of public opinion. They were expected to regulate their march by two national airs; to set their watches to European and to Arab time; to serve (which we know to be impossible) two masters. The task given them was to maintain the most effective possible control with the least possible pressure; but in any case there was to be no lack of efficiency in the control. Experience proved, as experience in analogous circumstances has elsewhere shown, that those who are entrusted with such a task cannot count for long on the co-operation even of the party most hostile to the regime that has been displaced. There is a moment when malcontents are willing, are even clamorous, that abuses should be corrected. But when they find that much, which to their eyes is admissible, counts in foreign opinion for abuse; and when they see that to others, not to themselves, is to be given the guidance of reform, they draw back before what they regard as excessive innovation, and decline to accept self-effacement.

One after another, in the course of a few years, Riyaz Pasha and Nubar Pasha disappeared. Riyaz resigned office in 1891, but came back in 1893, only to retire finally in 1894. In that year, he abandoned public life; and in the following year, Nubar Pasha, after return to office for a few months, followed him. The old order was passing; the veterans lagged superfluous on the stage. Nubar and Riyaz had not bearded Ismail Pasha, or revealed to Europeans the secrets of their prison-house, with



a view to being themselves dispossessed. The consciousness of what they had in past time assisted to achieve, pressure from their own countrymen, encouragement from foreign sources, disapproval of much of the measures and many of the men introduced under British auspices ;— in the case of Nubar, perhaps, expectations which he may have formed from the mission to Egypt of High Commissioners, with its indication of possible impending changes ;—sufficiently account for their attitude of opposition. The friction which distinguished the first decade of our occupation of Egypt came to a head after the accession of the present Khedive, when a storm broke which cleared the air. The pronouncement of Lord Rosebery on that occasion, on the 16th of February, 1893, to which it will be necessary to recur, was little less equivocal than Lord Granville's delivery nine years previously. It annihilated the Home Rulers. Though since then there has been peace, it may very probably be asked whether it is that peace which makes only for solitude, and is intolerant of opposition ; whether, in other words, men of the calibre of their predecessors would be welcome in an Egyptian Ministry to-day. The experience, the tenacity of will, the reforming zeal, which, though dimmed by defects of insight, or by want of sympathy with our modern methods, distinguished both Nubar and Riyaz, are not to be met with often in Egypt. It by no means follows, however, that the country is not as well served by the present as by the former men. Peace hath her victories not less renowned than war ; and in such circumstances as those of Egypt an attitude of sympathetic acquiescence is more useful than systematic opposition. The Minister who devotes himself to mastery of the objects of the British administration, and to an intelligent appreciation of its measures ; the Minister who will, on the one hand, warn

his British colleagues when they are in danger of running upon shoals or sunken rocks, and on the other, will try to diffuse among his countrymen some of the light which centres upon himself, will do them more service than by entering the lists encumbered with obsolete weapons, and endeavouring to gain the plaudits of the groundlings by unhorsing his redoubtable adversaries. Such a Minister is Mustafa Pasha Fahmi, the present head of the Cabinet.

The policy of marking time which was suggested by experience, and imposed by poverty, was not without its value. As years passed, our officers became better acquainted with the Egyptians. They learned to avoid what was needlessly irritating; they gained better insight into the merits and defects of existing institutions; and they could make it their business to enlist in their efforts whatever was best in the sympathies and characters of the agents through whom they had to work. If they had not money as yet to spend upon improvements and reforms, they were, at least, receiving instruction which, when money could be spent, might ensure its being laid out to advantage.

It is of interest to inquire a little deeper into the merits of the dispute about police matters which drove Nubar Pasha from office. When in 1883 General Valentine Baker had been charged with reorganization of the Police, the strength of the Egyptian Army was fixed by Lord Dufferin at 6000 men. This was barely sufficient to guard the southern frontier (there was no apprehension of Dervish invasion at that time), to preserve internal order, and to overawe the Bedouins. But larger numbers were not essential; and the presence of a considerable military force in Egypt had proved itself a source of danger. If the army, however, was to be few in numbers, it was

necessary to supplement it by a quasi-military body ; and as the General's personal training and aptitude lay rather in this direction than on the lines of police functions, the Constabulary under his control became very like a second army. The force was divided into three distinct sections, viz. the provincial Gendarmerie, the City Police, and the Reserve. In the provinces, the dismounted gendarmerie were divided into battalions, each province (or Mudariyeh) having its own battalion. The cavalry was divided into squadrons, each province having one or two squadrons. The two units, foot and mounted, were distributed into detachments in the various districts of the Province, the capital of the Province being the depot and headquarters of each unit. The commandants of gendarmerie commanding both units in each province were Egyptians or Turks, and held the rank of Kaimmakam, or Bimbashi (Lieut.-Colonel or Major), according to the size and importance of the province. A few British staff officers were detached for the military inspection of the force. The duties of the gendarmerie were guards, escorts, patrols, and the arresting of offenders when required. They were not concerned with inquiry into crime. Their discipline was under the chief of the staff of gendarmerie, with a numerous staff of British and Native staff officers. There was a reserve of a Turkish regiment of infantry and another of cavalry, but the former never consisted of more than a few skeleton companies, and the latter of three skeleton troops. The City Police were placed under Superintendents of Police, who were especially brought from India and entrusted with their reorganization ; it may be noted, in passing, that the City Police force has remained as then reorganized to the present hour.

In the provinces police duties were entrusted, as in old Egyptian days, to the headmen (Omdeh) and the watch-



men (ghafírs) of villages ; while the Turkish kawasses (a kind of unenrolled constabulary without instruction) were attached to the Provincial Governor (the Mudir's) staff ; and, subject to his control, acted under the orders of the head Police Superintendent of the Province (Mamúr-el-Zabtiah) ; or, in the several districts into which the province was divided, under his subordinate, the Názir-el-Kism.

Such were General Valentine Baker's arrangements. He confined his efforts, in fact, to the creation of a supplementary military force, and left the civil police in the provinces very much where he found it. Then came a civil officer, Mr. Clifford Lloyd, who had been sent by Lord Granville to Egypt in September, 1883, as Director-General of Reforms, an office created, apparently, *ad hoc* by the Foreign Secretary, because he had been one of the most energetic of the English magistrates introduced by Mr. Forster into Ireland during Mr. Gladstone's efforts at coercion in 1880 and 1881. During the absence of General Baker and his gendarmerie at Suakin, on their way to the fatal field of El Teb, Mr. Clifford Lloyd did away, throughout the country, with the Mamúr-el-Zabtiah, his kawasses, and his subordinates, and replaced them by a duly enrolled force. Police were placed for the detection or prevention of crime at the disposal of the Provincial Governors ; but the force as a whole remained under the orders of the Inspector-General and his staff. This proposal brought Mr. Clifford Lloyd into collision with Nubar Pasha. Nubar Pasha complained that the Mudirs had been deprived of their control over the new police ; that, without the Mamúr-el-Zabtiah and the Názir-el-Kism, that is, the provincial and district superintendents, with their kawasses, the Mudirs were powerless for the repression and detection of crime. The grave disorders which at this time broke out were directly due, he declared, to



the interference with the Mudir's authority. Mr. Clifford Lloyd, with at least equal reason, attributed them to the new and inexperienced native tribunals which were being introduced throughout the country, superseding the jurisdiction of Mudir and Mamúr alike. Nubar Pasha threatened to resign if Mr. Clifford Lloyd's views were enforced ; and as Nubar was at the time indispensable, and Mr. Clifford Lloyd refused to modify his system, it was arranged that the latter should retire in the summer of 1884.

The Mudirs of each province had been hitherto, not only heads of the police, but magistrates, dealing judicially with all but the more serious classes of crime. Their magisterial powers were now abruptly taken from them by the Ministry of Justice and transferred to the new tribunals, which were, in part, composed of European judges hastily brought into the country, and partly of Egyptians little furnished with legal knowledge. Even such of the Mudir's police powers as were left him were no longer exercised by him as chief of the police force in his province, acting through his immediate subordinates. He worked indirectly through a body of police, who were the servants of another master. Thus there was no central responsibility, no unit of provincial control. Nubar Pasha pulled one way, Mr. Clifford Lloyd another ; the tribunals had the last word, and baffled the energies of either. The Mudir cried "A plague on both your houses !" and demanded, if he were to be held responsible for the maintenance of order, that he should be reinstated in his former police and magisterial functions.

Mr. Clifford Lloyd had based his scheme partly on an Irish, partly on an Indian model. Military titles were abolished, and the Kaimmakam and Bimbashi went out of one door, to reappear as police commandants and inspectors at another. The hitherto commandant of gen-

darmerie became the commandant of the Mudariyeh Police, with his office at the Mudariyeh headquarters. The sub-inspectors in the sub-districts, which form the several component parts of a province, were charged with the prevention and detection of crime within their circles, but were responsible, not to the Mudir, but to their superior the commandant. Over the whole brooded Mr. Clifford Lloyd, as Under-Secretary of the Interior. When General Valentine Baker returned to Egypt in the earlier half of 1884, he came back much impressed, doubtless, with his experiences at El Teb. He devoted himself more assiduously than ever to the military training of his reserve, now freshly composed of Soudanese soldiers brought back to Egypt from the garrisons of Massowa, Berbera, Harrar, and Zeila, which had been recently liberated from the sea-coast. Military titles were resumed; back came the Bimbashi; vanished the Sub-Inspector. The members of the police force in the provinces were to be still at the disposition of the Mudir for police work; but they were no longer a civil police. They were a quasi-military force, far more occupied with drill than with detection. Their discipline, interior economy, and advancement, remained under the British Deputy-Inspector-General.

While the various authorities were pursuing their several experiments, it was necessary that crime should be suppressed, that order should be maintained, that the Khedive's government in the interior of the country should be carried on. Brigandage had again broken out, and crimes of violence were rampant. Serious crime was accordingly taken out of the hands of the newly instituted tribunals, and was handed over to special Commissions, somewhat resembling courts-martial, under the presidency of the Mudir, and subject to the control of the Ministry of the Interior, a Ministry of which the chief and the staff

were alike Egyptian. Henceforward, for a time, on the one side were the quasi-military police ; on the other the Mudir and his special Brigandage Commission. This lasted from 1885 to 1889, when a special inquiry showed that the remedy had been worse than the disease. These special Commissioners had proved themselves instruments of violence, illegality, and injustice. So in turn they too were abolished.

Much of all this confusion was undoubtedly due to the civil administration of the country being in a state of transition. But the mischief was greatly aggravated by the general belief that the close of the British military occupation was imminent. Changes were hurried on to satisfy the demand from London for such a standard of reform, and such promise of efficiency as might be quoted in justification of withdrawal. Every measure was adopted under high pressure ; and the more radical the change, the greater the confidence with which it was advocated.

These considerations apart, there is probably no branch of the public service which is more difficult to deal with in the East than that of police. The matter is one which has for years been the despair of Indian governors. Lord Curzon, as we have seen, caused the subject to be examined by a strong Police Commission. Long before the days of Lord Curzon, reports of police commissions were thick as autumn leaves. It is almost impossible to get respectable men to enter the higher grades of the police, for not only is such service looked upon by the native eye with social disfavour, but it exposes those who are enrolled in it to the intrigues of the worst class of the population, among a society whose members of all ranks and classes see little shame in such manœuvres. Their machinations are sure to cause police officers infinite annoyance, and may not improb-



ably involve them in ruin. Where little or no publicity is assured from the existence of a well-organized Press, where there is no strong native Bar, where the mass of the people have more belief in the power of the police to injure them than in the power of the law to protect them, it is next to impossible to organize a good working police force from native material. Whether it be good or bad, a police force is a fair index of the status of the society in which it is found. For unless controlled and kept in check by fearless and vigorous expressions of public sentiment, such as are possible only in free communities, it is a tremendous engine of oppression; *timeri nisi pertimuerit*; a terror not more to the evil-doer than to the innocent but blackmailable public. It was an initial mistake to put the police under the control of a soldier, who was profoundly ignorant of police duties. Military training of some portion of the force was necessary, in view of the numerical weakness of the army; but to base the whole of the Police system on a purely military footing was a great mistake. Mr. Clifford Lloyd's conception of a police force was more correct, had he not wholly withdrawn the police from the control of the Mudir. A small quasi-military reserve to ensure order, and a body of enrolled civil constabulary who, with their commandant, would have been under the control of the Mudir for prevention and detection of crime, but subject for purely disciplinary purposes to their police superior alone, might probably have been the best solution.

There is much in the controversy which recalls similar disputes in British India. The Mudir in his province, like the magistrate of an Indian district, is the pivot on which internal administration turns. He is the link between the central Government and the people; the authority who is held responsible for order and security.



The general control and supervision of all the executive departments of the Civil Government, within the area of his charge, are centred in him. There is, however, one important difference. One of the hardy annuals of the Indian reformer—one of his stock grievances—is the deaf ear that is turned by the authorities to his demand for the separation of police from magisterial powers. But in India experience has confirmed the fusion. In that country the best guarantee to be found for a tolerable police service and for public security, in the present state of society, is that the "district magistrate" should be supreme in police matters, both over the police commandant and his subordinates; and, further, should be the final authority responsible for the working, as apart from the drill or discipline of the police; while retaining limited punitive powers as magistrate (subject to appeal) over turbulent and lawless elements within his charge. In Egypt such powers have been denied to the Mudir; who at present may very probably be less fitted for their exercise than is an Indian district magistrate.

It would seem, if the view taken in this summary is correct, that all who were concerned in the matter were, in their several degrees, in error; General Baker because he made little or no effort to organize a civil police, but contented himself with drilling his reserves; Mr. Clifford Lloyd, because he entirely withdrew the civil police from the control of the Mudir; Nubar Pasha, because he wished to revert to the old order of things, which was not only no longer admissible, but which could not be tolerated by the new Tribunals.

These Tribunals had greatly added to the confusion. They had been hastily pieced together, and were composed of lawyers brought from Belgium, Holland, or other of the smaller European States, who knew little or nothing of

Egypt, and of Egyptian judges who knew little or nothing of law. No Bar existed to give them aid ; and they were hampered by the introduction of what in the French system of criminal procedure (adopted in Egypt) is known as the Parquet. The Parquet was under the orders of the Procureur-General, who is a kind of Government prosecutor, with delegates attached to each Tribunal. In all matters connected with criminal prosecution the police were under the Parquet. The Parquet prepared the case for the Tribunals ; the police supplied, or should have supplied, the Parquet with the facts necessary to the prosecution. The Parquet inundated the office of the Procureur-General with reports of the inefficiency of the police, which the Procureur-General was too busy to read, and which the Inspector-General of Police never saw. The Tribunals blamed the police ; and, strong only in the feeling of their own incompetency, preferred to acquit the criminal. It was not till a later day, when the evil was attacked at the root, and when the Ministry of the Interior was permanently strengthened by the presence of an English Adviser, that confusion was reduced to order.

## CHAPTER XIV

### REFORM AND REVIVAL

The Mixed Courts—The Consular Courts—The Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh—The Reformed State Tribunals—Efforts at improving them—Appointment of Mr. Scott as Judicial Adviser—Difficulty of introducing reliable indigenous Courts of Justice into a country of low morale—Progress in Irrigation—Agricultural Roads.

THE Egyptian Tribunals must have a page or two devoted to them; but when speaking of Tribunals in Egypt one must distinguish, for within the narrow limits of that small country there exist no fewer than four different systems. There are the Mixed Courts, established in 1876 in the time of Ismail Pasha, through the agency of Nubar Pasha. At Cairo, Alexandria, and Mansourah are Mixed Courts of First Instance, and at Alexandria the Mixed Court of Appeal. These courts decide all civil suits in which one or both parties to the action are European or American subjects; but if both parties are Europeans of the same nationality the Mixed Courts are only competent to deal with cases relating to real property. They are wholly independent of the Government, the judges being nominated by eleven of the European Powers, and by the United States of America, and are, in truth, a little kingdom and a law to themselves. Every five years the system is re-inaugurated, and a fresh quinquennial lease of life is given to these courts. Not only do the judges of the Mixed Courts interpret the law, but they decide what is the nature of their own powers. Should they act in a manner which may

appear to a minority of judges, or to the Egyptian Government, or to the public, to be *ultra vires*, all are alike powerless to take action. No Court of Cassation exists; international control is practically non-existent; public opinion in Egypt has little weight. The only resource open to the Egyptian Government is to address itself to the Powers, who, should they be brought into agreement, can modify the law. But experience has taught Egypt to hesitate long before committing herself to an appeal in that quarter. For the Mixed Tribunals the Egyptian Government, however, from its own administrative point of view, is not directly responsible. Then there are the Consular Courts. When a subject of a European Power, resident in Egypt, is accused of a criminal offence, he is tried by his consul according to the law of his own country. The judges in these courts are usually trained lawyers; and the Egyptian Government has no jurisdiction whatever over them. We come next to those Muhammadan Religious Courts, which deal with all questions relating to personal status, such as marriage, divorce, guardianship, testamentary succession, or religious trusts. The jurisprudence of these courts is based on the "Sharia," the canon law of Islam. These courts are known as the "Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh," and are not entrusted to secular hands. They lie outside the system of judicial administration, with which the British advisers of the Government are concerned. The law administered is the law of the Kuran, and the judges are the Ulema, men learned in the religious law, the greater or lesser Gamaliels of Islam as represented in Egypt. It will have been seen in an earlier chapter that the Grand Kadi, who is the head of this judicial body, receives his nomination directly from Constantinople. The fourth and last section of the judicial machinery, the branch with which we are mainly concerned, consists of the



Government secular Tribunals, whose jurisdiction extends to Egyptian subjects alone; and to these, again, only so far as the subject-matter of litigation does not fall within the jurisdiction of the Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh. It will thus be seen that the judicial department in Egypt is very restricted in operation; and that it is but a narrow stream of State justice which trickles through the channel assigned to it.

The reform of the State Tribunals, commenced in 1883, had hitherto made but little progress. Judges and a Bar cannot be improvised. A substantive Civil Code, and Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure, were under preparation before the military revolt, and were promulgated in 1883. They followed French models; and except that they took too little note of the special features of Egyptian life and social development, and had been too mechanically drafted on codes in force in France, they were found to be fairly applicable. The Tribunals before 1883 were "so bad, so imbecile, and so corrupt," Lord Dufferin wrote, that almost any change might mark improvement. But the new Tribunals were cumbrous, overmanned, and costly. Decisions were given by three judges, one of whom might be a European, profoundly ignorant of the customs, the people, and the language of Egypt. Dilatory and timid in their proceedings and their decisions, the courts commanded little confidence or respect. Much attention had been paid to them; wise men had come from the East and from the West, and reported on them; among others, Sir Raymond West, ex-puisne High Court judge in Bombay, had delivered himself at much length. But all had prescribed without appreciable effect. Hippocrates and the rest of them might say what they liked; the patient continued in a parlous way. The tribunals were now awaiting the advent of Mr. (later Sir John) Scott,

who had agreed to return to Cairo in the capacity of Judicial Adviser. Mr. Scott had passed some years in Egypt as a Judge of the Mixed Courts, and was conversant with its people and with its law. He had left Egypt after 1882, for a seat in the Bombay High Court, and was invited in 1890 to return and assist in improving the native tribunals. As Adviser at the Ministry of Justice, being a man of temperate and judicial mind, of calm temper, and with personal knowledge of Egyptian officials and Egyptian methods, he succeeded in imparting new life to the courts. But his assumption of office was signalized by the resignation of Riyaz Pasha in 1891, who opposed the subjection of the courts to European supervision, much as Nubar had struggled against the passing of Police into the hands of British officers. Riyaz Pasha was succeeded by Mustafa Pasha Fahmi.

Since then there has been, as we shall see, progressive improvement; but in the administration of justice perhaps more than in any other department of State the hand of time must be awaited. What are courts of justice without qualified judges and a competent Bar? What can be hoped for from a native Bench in the absence of a sensitive public conscience, which insists on a high standard of efficiency, and on absolute impartiality? This conscience does not spring up, like the gourd of Jonah, in a night. It is the slow fruit of many years of gestation. Great national vices of mind must be abandoned, and the moral fibre of a people must be materially strengthened, before the public has the right to expect competent and incorruptible courts of justice, supplied with judges from among its own ranks. A country's courts of justice, like its police, are usually as good as it deserves. When intolerance of arbitrary methods and of administrative abuses has become deep-rooted, when respect for individual rights is supreme, and collective

determination to insist on the independence and purity of the courts is established beyond question, the judges will not fail to reflect the public mind. Such a consummation is devoutly to be wished in every country; as yet we are far from it in Egypt.

At the close of 1889, after five years' continuous labour, the reconstruction of the barrage on a firm and final basis was approaching completion. Fuller notice of this great work is postponed till a later page, for it was not completed till the middle of the following year. The irrigation officers had been also employed in remodelling canals and distributaries, in carrying out drainage works, in ensuring equitable distribution of water, and in substituting gradually paid labour for the *corvée*. In December, 1889, the Nile labour *corvée* was finally abolished; and for an annual sum of £E.400,000 the Public Works undertook, from 1890 onwards, to carry out all earthwork repairs. The approaching completion of the barrage and the better laying out of canals and drainage cuts had greatly assisted this result; but the abolition of the *corvée* was mainly due to the untiring advocacy and to the engineering skill of Colonel Scott Moncrieff. He was by this time Under-Secretary of State in the Public Works Department, and had been succeeded as Inspector-General of Irrigation by Colonel Ross, R.E., one of the group who had followed him from India.

In Upper and Middle Egypt the chief care of the irrigation officers was the improvement of the basin system of irrigation. There are—though before long there will have ceased to be—two distinct systems of irrigation employed in Egypt—the system of perennial, and the system of basin irrigation. The latter is the system



of inundation during the annual Nile flood; the former is the ordinary continuous irrigation by field channels throughout the year. The Delta is perennially irrigated; in the rest of Egypt the ancient basin system partially survives, but it is the aim of the irrigation officers to replace it by perennial irrigation as fast as funds are available. Under the basin system, the natural inundation caused by the Nile overflow is assisted by longitudinal and transverse banks enclosing the land to be flooded, so that the water is dammed up in each basin to the extent required to make it cover the high as well as the lower lands. When the British engineers came upon the scene, some of the banks were found to have masonry regulators, with escapes to admit of water being passed in at will, but banks and controlling apparatus were alike out of order. When water needed drawing off, that crops might be sown, the banks had to be cut. Control over the water being thereby lost, it had to be run off, and the banks had to be again repaired for the next flood. Inundation of the basins was facilitated by canals carried through the high lands bordering the river; these canals had rarely been provided with head works of control; and, as a rule, they did not take off from the river at a point far enough up stream from the lands depending on them, to be efficient during a period of low levels. About £750,000 was given to the irrigation department, from the proceeds of a further issue of Preference Stock in 1890, for remodelling the Upper Egypt basin system, with the result of ensuring the supply of water to some 500,000 acres, which, in the event of a low flood, would have been left wholly without means of irrigation. When, through the agency of the Assouan dam, perennial irrigation has been brought into general use in Middle Egypt, two crops a year in lieu of one



will be grown, and the value of land will be more than doubled. Of this more on a later page.

In the spring of 1889 efforts were first made to institute a system of agricultural roads in the Delta, and to substitute wheeled traffic for camels and donkeys. Considerable sums were voted by notables in various provinces, to be collected at rates varying from two to three piastres (fivepence to sevenpence-halfpenny) per acre. Good progress was made in later years in extending this system of roads; and when in 1898 light agricultural railways were introduced into the Delta, it was utilized, by agreement with the Government, for the permanent way.

## CHAPTER XV

### LORD CROMER'S FISCAL POLICY—COLLAPSE OF DERVISH INVASION—A NEW BIRTH

Financial sunshine—The turn of the fellah—Fiscal moderation the policy of Lord Lawrence and Lord Cromer—Its value in circumstances such as those of Egypt—Battle of Toski—Death of Wad el Najúmi—Collapse of Dervish invasion—1890, the "Great Divide"—Internal reform the subject of future chapters—Conversion of loans—Remission of taxation—The Professional tax and French opposition—Miscellaneous measures of reform—Growth of ordinary revenue—Increase in tobacco revenue.

THE clouds were lifting. In 1889, £E.46,793 was added, as the Government share of the surplus, to its Special Reserve Fund; in 1890 the Government share of the surplus amounted to £E.269,081. In the same years £E.130,341 and £E.384,858 were respectively credited to the General Reserve Fund. The closing balance of that fund in December, 1889, amounted to £E.754,516; the balance of the Special Reserve at the same date was £E.246,058. The finances were now beyond reasonable prospect of immediate danger, and the time had come for taking measures in hand for fiscal relief to the taxpayer. For more than twenty years the country had been scourged by war, pestilence, debt, and oppression. "All the glories" had ended in disaster. The vaunted conquests of Muhammad Ali, the easy affluence of Said Pasha, the golden hour of Ismail, had closed miserably in the insolvency court, and Egypt and her people had become the shuttlecock of nations. Little by little, meanwhile, in spite of the constant opposition of France, of unceasing warfare on the

southern frontier of Egypt, of falling prices for produce, the country had been raising itself from the insolvency of its former government under a system of the severest economy, by the development of irrigation, and by the patient labour of its people. After unbroken centuries of neglect, the turn of the fellah had at length arrived. It was the first time in all its history that the well-being of the people of Egypt had been recognized as a trust. The earlier efforts of his British friends had been devoted to rescuing the fellah from internationalism, and to redeeming his country, that soil of Egypt which is so precious to him, from its bankrupt condition. Till that was accomplished little could be done to free him personally from the fiscal burdens which pressed upon him. But his hour had now come. Until he himself was relieved, at least in part, of burdensome taxation, the ardour of departmental reform would be restrained. Fiscal emancipation would precede administrative improvement. Money would not be granted to the departments till it could be given without pressure on the taxpayer. Projects for much of his own material well-being, no less than other projects, would be postponed. Expenditure, even on such a needful subject as the education of his children, would remain in abeyance.

The action adopted in this regard was identical with the policy of Lord Lawrence in India, and is based no less on political and administrative than on economic grounds. It was an axiom with him that a foreign ruler can only hope to establish in the general mind one unanswerable popular proof of his right to hold the reins of government. An alien has but one certain method of commending himself, and of justifying his presence. He must be able to show to the people who have come under his care that he has secured them freedom from onerous fiscal burdens such as they have never before known at any

time under any native administration. Fiscal moderation, fiscal security, and fiscal equity, are his credentials. Every man who tastes, appreciates these gifts ; and there are but few who have not an opportunity of tasting. There are not many means of conciliating men whose religion, social habits, traditions, and colour, are wholly opposed to those of their rulers. Progress, such as Western people more or less eagerly seek for, the Muhammadan of Egypt or of India does not put in the front of his desires ; nor does order offer to his mind the advantages which Europeans ascribe to it. System and method, which to us seem indispensable, are apt to be tiresome to people long debauched by the excitement and surprises of chance and of circumstance. Self-government, on the broad basis of representation, is exotic. Justice is welcome ; but Western justice is costly ; is apt to seem capricious ; and is almost always slow. " Better a speedy denial of justice," says the Persian proverb, " than justice long deferred." Equality before the law is the righteousness that exalteth a nation ; but moderation in the demands of the Treasury is the boon universally valued. The foreign Government that assures and maintains it gives unanswerable evidence of sympathetic purpose, and will receive in return a large measure of confidence. This policy does not dazzle or attract. It requires courage, self-restraint, and self-denial on the part of the ruler. Its true defence is that it is " understood of the people."

The axiom *Festina lente* applies perhaps more forcibly in the earlier stages of foreign rule than at a later date. As years fade, the tradition of the foreigner becomes more established, and the motives which actuated him have received fuller interpretation. As successive generations arrive and pass away, there is formed a deposit of favourable opinion which, gradually settling down, begins to



harden into firm conviction. Something of solidarity is created between governor and governed. Use and custom have their effect. There is the recollection of common trials, and of triumphs shared together. Little by little, there establishes itself a mutual past. But in Egypt this time was not yet. It was, and still is, the day of small beginnings; of obstructions to be cleared away; of foundations to be laboriously placed. The best of all foundations in such a case, and at such a time, is fiscal moderation; and in Egypt it was ensured by a deliberate hand, regardless of impatient critics, and in defiance of temptation to pass on to more attractive and imposing superstructure.

While the close of 1889 saw the end of the struggle with insolvency, it saw also the destruction of the Khalifa's aggressive schemes. After 1889 there was no more anxiety about the southern frontier. The threatened invasion had been attempted, had penetrated some sixty miles beyond the Egyptian boundary at Wadi Halfa, had there died out, and had utterly failed. The invaders had headed for Assouan, anticipating at that place the great victory which the Khalifa had foretold. But at Toski, on the 3rd of August, 1889, their hosts had been routed by a force almost wholly composed of Egyptians and Soudanis, and their most successful leader had been slain. Nine years were yet to pass before the abomination of desolation, the curse of the Khalifa's rule, was removed from the Soudan; but even the heart of that dreamer of dreams and seer of visions must have failed him before the palpable disaster of this crushing repulse. Wad el Najúmi, the successful leader at Shekan and at Khartum, was killed at Toski with 62 of his Amirs. Some 1200 of the Ansár were slain, and as many were taken prisoners. Spears, standards, swords, and rifles, fell in great quantities into the hands

of the victors. Of 5000 fighting men who had crossed the frontier of Egypt on July 1st, and penetrated to the north of Wadi Halfa, only 800 men and 36 Amirs returned, so greatly had their numbers been lessened by desertions, and by losses in fighting, between the 1st of July and the 3rd of August. Of 8000 camp followers, some 6000 remained as prisoners in the hands of the Egyptians. "To the cause of Mahdism," writes Sir Reginald Wingate, "the blow was perhaps the most severe that had as yet befallen it. Of all their campaigns in various directions, the Mahdi, and subsequently the Khalifa, had looked to Egypt as the goal for which to strive; and now, after long years of preparation and planning, their supreme effort had met with the most complete disaster. Their bravest and most fanatical leader, one who had taken an important part in the defeat of Hicks and in the capture of Khartum, was slain; and of all his force but a few escaped to tell of the horrors of that desert march, and the terrible hail of bullets which met and crushed them at last."

The year 1890 marks the watershed of Egyptian finance, the "Great Divide." Behind it are clouds and darkness; but on this side of 1890, successive years, like the torturers in the Khalifa's vision, have radiantly smiled upon Cairo. After a long struggle, equilibrium had been secured. Though opponents might obstruct, and obstacles would still be created, there would be no further fear of insolvency. Before the close of 1896 recovery was complete, and the credit of Egypt was restored. In 1890 the ordinary revenue for the first time reached eight figures, amounting in that year to £E.10,236,612. With the lapse of seven years it entered on eleven million; after six more years, another million was added. This increase was effected in spite of large remissions of taxation, amounting

to not less than an annual figure of £E.1,600,000; in spite, too, of prices so low as to raise unpleasant apprehensions. Confidence was immeasurably strengthened in 1898, after an end was put to the rule of the Khalifa. But the final seal was affixed to the redemption of Egypt when, in 1904, the Governments of Great Britain and France concluded their memorable agreement, which, it is permitted to hope, may inaugurate an era of amity between the two nations. Subject to fulfilment of her obligations, the finances of Egypt thenceforward were her own. With the recovery of the Soudan and the entry of British, conjointly with Egyptian, dominion into the sphere of Central Africa, a new world was opened to enterprise. So vast is the area of the Egyptian Soudan, so unknown its possibilities, so full of mystery and of fascination is the dim light which broods over the Dark Continent, that Egypt itself seems to be threatened with eclipse. But however much it may be overshadowed by its monstrous dependency on the south, the position of the Nilotic Delta will for long years secure to it the first place in public interest.

With the close of the period of stress and storm the order of this narrative may be modified. Excepting for a brief interval, Egypt entered in the last decade of the nineteenth century into the happy category of nations without a history. The course of events was no longer marked by rocks or roaring cataracts, but was spread out, like Nile, into a smooth and fertilizing flood. It would be tedious to chronicle annual progress too closely as we pass on with the broad current of time. It may very possibly be found tiresome, in any case, to read such a tale of merely civil reorganization as will be necessary for the purpose of our narrative. The simple annals of internal reform have little of interest to the reader who is fresh from ventures by land, from shock of war, or from triumphs of finance. Yet the



gradual evolution of order from disorder, and the substitution of a stable scheme of civil government for the pinchbeck system which had been adopted under the governors of Egypt, are not without an interest of their own. The character of the difficulties to be overcome, the agency to be employed, the adverse pressure of the local atmosphere—all lend to this unassuming struggle an interest which might otherwise be wanting. A metaphor to which we shall presently recur may be applied to all this business of reform: it was like mending a watch and never stopping the works. The business of the State had to be carried on, though the machinery was in course of renewal. For the purposes of this part of the narrative, the period on which we are about to enter may be divided into groups, and the interval from 1890 to 1896, inclusively, may be taken as the next in order. It was a period mainly of remission of taxation, though it felt the first movements of reform. This interval was brought abruptly to a close in the autumn of 1896 by the resumption of hostilities in the Soudan; but after the fall of Omdurman in September, 1898, revival in Egypt resumed its course untroubled, and has so continued to the present hour. The second group of years will thus be the latter part of 1896, and the whole of 1897 and 1898; and the years 1899 to 1904 will close the whole period.

In 1890, mainly through the labour and address of the Financial Adviser, the Privileged and Daira Stocks were respectively converted from 5 per cent Stock into  $3\frac{1}{2}$  and 4 per cent; in the following year the Domains Stock was converted from 5 per cent to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent Stock. The conversion of the two latter loans indirectly relieved pressure on the State by reducing the possible amount of deficit for which, in the event of their default, the Treasury was responsible. The conversion of the Privileged Stock relieved the Treasury



of a direct annual charge of £E.264,818. The Government wished to utilize all available economies due to the conversion of the loans for the purpose of increasing its authorized expenditure. But the Caisse uniformly negatived this proposal; and up to the settlement of 1904 these annual savings were left to accumulate till they amounted to above six millions sterling.

More than a million of taxation was remitted between 1890 and 1896. The *corvée*, which in effect was taxation in the flesh, was done away with in 1890, as a means of annually clearing out the canals and distributaries at an annual cost of £E.400,000; a little later £E.280,000 annual taxation was blotted out by the abolition of weighing dues, taxes on sheep and goats, the abolition of the professional tax, and minor items. £E.430,000 were taken off the land revenue rolls, in addition to remission of £E.1,245,000 due as arrears. This annual remission of, say, £E.1,100,000 was effected on a revenue of little over ten million, a proportion of somewhat more than one-tenth. Reductions in direct taxation apart, £E.135,000 of annual revenue was abandoned in the salt tax, and in railway fares. Postal and telegraph rates were reduced by 50 per cent; octroi duties were abolished in the smaller provincial towns. The only increase of taxation was in the tobacco duty, which has been mentioned at page 170, and in the levying of a house-tax upon Europeans under the terms of the international compact of 1885.

The professional tax, which was thus now abandoned, was one of the three imposts which, by the terms of the Convention of March, 1885, might be levied on Europeans resident in Egypt. After innumerable delays, and in spite of the inevitable shifts and subtleties of diplomacy, the decree enforcing the tax issued in March, 1891. Its subsequent history illustrates the nature of the political

pressure which, even in days of comparative ease, was exercised upon the British Agency in Cairo, and the compromises to which it was compelled to submit.

In the seven years' interval that elapsed between 1884, when the imposition of this tax was agreed to by the Powers, and 1891, when the text of the decree was at last accepted, the position had so improved that the revenue to be derived from imposing the professional tax upon Europeans was no longer greatly needed. The negotiations on the subject had latterly been continued rather with a view to equal treatment between Egyptian and European than from fiscal need or greed. Now, in 1890 the Egyptian Government, as it happened, was anxious to reduce the tax on salt, which pressed perhaps more hardly than any other burden on the people. The probable loss of revenue was estimated at £E.80,000 a year. Though, from the point of view of the Powers, the change was within the competence of the Egyptian Government, it was not possible for its treasury to bear the loss of revenue involved without seeking some modification of the financial restrictions as at the time imposed. An appeal was therefore made to the French Government to allow a portion of the economies resulting from the recent conversion of the debt to be applied to the abolition of the *corvée*. To this relief, which would have permitted the Egyptian Government to reduce the salt-tax, the French Government refused its assent. It was then proposed that a sum of £E.150,000, necessary to the complete abolition of the *corvée*, should be added to the annual limit of "administrative expenditure" recognized by the Powers; otherwise, the deficit resulting from the proposed salt-tax reduction must have been met from the half-surplus which was at the disposal of the Egyptian Government, or from fresh taxation. The French Government, while

accepting this proposal, bargained in consideration of its assent for the entire abolition of the professional tax. In view of the financial position in 1891, the Egyptian Government accepted the French proposal, though with a net loss to prospective revenue of £E.25,000 annually.

Apart from direct measures for the fiscal relief of the fellah, there must be also reckoned the increase to the productive power of the soil from the enlarged supply and improved distribution of water. The barrage was completed in 1890, and its full effects began in that year to be felt throughout the Delta. Throughout Middle Egypt, that is, in the area between Assiout and Cairo, improvements in basin irrigation, and its slow but progressive change into perennial irrigation, continued. The land revenue was collected at fixed periods, suited to the season for gathering in crops. Every man knew to a fraction what he would have to pay at a given date; and, so far as payment of his land revenue was concerned, recourse to the money-lender was obviated. By the commutation of pensions into land, a considerable quantity of the soil of Egypt was passing back into the hands of the middle and lower classes. Roads were under construction in the Delta. The loss to the finances from the abolition of the *corvée* was the gain of the people. The fellah could count on being left to till his lands in peace; and whenever the clearing out of minor channels or of canals was needed, not only was the work less than in former years, but labour was spontaneous and remunerated. Considerable as all this was, much more could have been attained in the way of fiscal reductions had France not refused her assent to the proposal that the economies resulting from the conversion of the Privileged, the Daira, and the Domains loans, which, with accumulating interest, annually amounted, from 1894, to more than £E.400,000, should be devoted

to administrative purposes: or, put in another form, that the authorized administrative annual expenditure should be increased by this amount. While Egypt was fully solvent, with excellent prospects, and an accumulated reserve of unappropriated funds from the annual surplus of successive years, amounting at the close of 1895 to little less than £E.1,700,000, a sum of nearly £E.2,000,000, being the accumulated annual economy from conversions, was already lying enforcedly idle.

Ordinary revenue and the ordinary expenditure remained fairly constant figures from 1890 to the close of 1896. The figures are as follows:—

	Revenue.	Ordinary Expenditure.
1889 . .	£E.9,718,958	... £E.9,500,531
1890 . .	10,236,612	... 9,589,773
1891 . .	10,539,460	... 9,606,598
1892 . .	10,297,312	... 9,551,598
1893 . .	10,241,286	... 9,554,986
1894 . .	10,161,318	... 9,469,556
1895 . .	10,431,263	... 9,428,597
1896 . .	10,693,577	... 9,604,627

Broadly speaking, it may be said that Egypt closed the year 1896 with an excess of the year's revenue over authorized expenditure of £E.1,000,000, and with reserve funds in hand, free and unassigned, inclusive of the Conversion Economies of about £E.4,000,000.

But it will not be forgotten that considerable expenditure, much of which was extraordinary and of the nature of capital outlay, was incurred from the Reserve Funds. Expenditure was divided into ordinary expenditure, not exceeding the limits imposed by the International Convention of 1885, or by subsequent modifications agreed to by the Powers, and extraordinary expenditure, charged to reserve funds or to loans. From 1891 certain items were from time to time debited, with the consent of the Commissioners of the Caisse, to the General Reserve



Fund, which was within their control. With their sanction, advances repayable at fixed periods were also made from time to time for objects of public utility. Thus, in 1892, £E.133,473 was expended on Public Buildings (this included the rebuilding of the Khedive's Palace at Abdin, which had been partially destroyed by fire in 1891); in 1893, £E.511,488, and in 1895, £E.124,441, were advanced to the Railway Administration for construction of new lines, and for further bridges over the Nile. The Caisse had thus become an international fifth wheel in the finances; which sometimes turned smoothly, and sometimes wholly refused to turn, but which at all times was needless for the security of the public creditor, and remained to the end liable to friction, and out of harmony with progress.

With the revival of the country, the Customs receipts, especially receipts from the tobacco import duty, rapidly rose. For reasons which are about to be explained, the growth of native tobacco was now wholly prohibited in Egypt, while the duty on foreign tobacco was raised to 20 piastres (the piastre being equivalent to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.) per kilogramme (2.2046 lb.). Taking as starting-point, for purposes of comparison, the year 1883, the increase in Customs and tobacco duties was as follows:—

	Total Customs duties apart from Tobacco.		Tobacco duty.		Total.
1883	. £E.669,339	...	86,695	...	756,034
1890	. 651,288	...	727,788	...	1,379,076
1891	. 808,773	...	828,756	...	1,637,529
1892	. 815,156	...	655,297	...	1,470,453
1893	. 756,522	...	788,660	...	1,545,182
1894	. 824,843	...	932,749	...	1,757,592
1895	. 770,466	...	968,576	...	1,739,042
1896	. 889,553	...	1,006,526	...	1,896,079

The growth of tobacco in Egypt was positively prohibited in 1890. It was not a *bona fide* indigenous in-

dustry, and brought little or no profit to the cultivators ; but was in the hands of a small number of traders, who utilized it for the growth of the native plant, on which the excise duty was much less than the import duty on foreign tobacco. This native tobacco was mixed with the imported article, and was sold at a very high rate of profit. Obviously, this was not a trade which called for tender treatment. Moreover, the area of indigenous tobacco had been successively limited, by decrees under the old Turkish regime, to 3000 and to 1500 acres. Of a total of 5,200,000 acres under cultivation of all kinds, in 1900, only an infinitesimal area therefore should have been planted with tobacco. A much larger area was clandestinely grown ; but this was beyond the pale of consideration. To have placed the native article on a level with imported tobacco, it would have been necessary to impose an excise duty of no less than £E.300 per acre. It was simpler to prohibit the growth of tobacco entirely.

Land Revenue collections, which in 1890 had amounted to £E.5,118,142 on an area of 4,941,488 acres, had been reduced in 1896 to £E.4,771,285 on an area of 5,352,400 acres. Comparison of the incidence of taxation per head of the population is not reliable, for the census taken in 1882 was carried out when the country was profoundly agitated by political disturbances, and within a few months of war. At such a time little attention was paid to accurate compilation or supervision ; and until the next census is taken calculations based on comparative figures cannot yield reliable results. On the figures of the census of 1897 the incidence of taxation per head of population was a little over sixteen shillings. Enough has been said to prove how greatly the burden of taxation had been lightened, whether in the form of land revenue, of direct imposts, or indirectly in the form of taxes on communications.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE BARRAGE—SIR JOHN SCOTT AND THE NATIVE TRIBUNALS

History of the barrage—Its dilapidated state—The work of restoration—“Like mending a watch, and never stopping the works”—Completion in 1890—Subsequent strengthening between 1891 and 1898 by construction of weirs—Estimated annual benefit by its restoration—The barrage similar to the general British position in Egypt—Cost of weirs—First mention of projected Assouan reservoir—International Commission appointed to examine proposal—Mr. Scott and the Tribunals—His reforms—Establishes summary Courts—Reduces number of judges—Creates a Committee of Judicial Control—Other improvements—Number of judges in Court of Appeal.

IN 1890 the six years' work of restoration on the Nile barrage was brought to a close, and it was definitely established as the great controlling power of the Delta. The barrage plays so important a part in the irrigation of Egypt, it is in itself so great a work, and the history of its restoration is so creditable to the French and British engineers who at one time or other were engaged on it, that it calls for further notice.

It was begun on the design of two French engineers—Linant de Bellefonds and Mougel Bey—during the reign of Muhammad Ali, in or about the year 1843. It was finished in 1861 at a cost of £E.1,800,000, apart, however, from the very considerable item of *corvée* and military labour. In 1867, owing to defects in the structure, it was abandoned, and Mr. (afterwards Sir) John Fowler, having been requested by Ismail Pasha to examine it,

reported that £1,200,000 would be required to place it in serviceable order.

The barrage is a great river dam fifteen miles north of Cairo, consisting of two bridges placed across the Rosetta and Damietta branches of the Nile, where they divide at the apex of the Delta. The arches of these bridges are intended to be fitted with gates, by dropping which the water can be held up and diverted into three main canals, the sources of irrigation to the whole of Lower Egypt. It was intended that when the river was low, and the gates dropped, the water should be raised  $4\frac{1}{2}$  metres, or 14 ft. 9 in. When the Nile was in flood the gates would be raised, and every possible obstruction removed from the flow of the river. The arches are of 5 metres span, numbering sixty-one in the barrage of the Rosetta and seventy-one in that of the Damietta branch. On the flanks are locks for the passage of boats. The whole length of the barrage is 1095 yards.

It has been said that when the river was low and the gates were dropped, it was intended that the water should be raised  $4\frac{1}{2}$  metres, or 14 ft. 9 in. On the Damietta side the gates were never even fitted to the arches; on the Rosetta side the maximum head of water ever held up was 1'75 metres, or 5 ft. 9 in.; and this only for a short time. Cracks had appeared in the masonry of the Rosetta barrage shortly after 1863, and in 1867 so considerable a settlement had taken place that no serious effort was again made to use it till the Indian engineers, Colonel Scott Moncrieff, R.E., Mr. Willcocks, Colonel Western, R.E., and the late Mr. A. G. W. Reid, appeared upon the scene. They found the barrage so long neglected that its timbers were rotten; its iron was rusted; there were no appliances or tools; and attached to it was a large establishment of superannuated and incompetent men, who for



years had done little beyond drawing their pay. It was built on nothing more solid than alternate beds of fine river sand and alluvial mud. In 1884 the water surface was held up experimentally 2·20 metres, or 7 ft. 2 in., when the river was at its lowest. This flushed the canals, and gave an unwonted impulse to irrigation. In 1885 the system of temporarily patching up and working the unsound barrage was carried on, and 3 metres, or 9 ft. 10 in., was held up throughout the low Nile season. Then came the £1,000,000 from the International Convention, and repairs were seriously begun.

The water on one side, in June, 1885, was 15·74 ft. deep, on the other side it was only 5·90 ft., a difference of nearly 10 ft. Hence water was constantly tending to percolate under the foundations, and to establish a uniform level. As it passed through mud and sand, it carried particles with it, and, if no remedy were applied, by degrees would undermine the whole foundations. Some such action had caused the cracks in 1867.

The problem was to place across the river an impermeable bar, round which the water would not travel. In March, 1886, an earthen coffer-dam was commenced out into the river, enclosing the twenty arches at the west end of the Rosetta barrage, these being the arches most seriously cracked. The water within the coffer-dam was pumped out, and the engineers got down to the flooring, and saw what they had to deal with. One of their chief difficulties had arisen from the want of any record, plan, or description of what had actually been built.

It was decided to spread the foundations out, so as to form a broad watertight platform. The aim of this platform was to prevent water passing under; or to compel what little did pass to travel so far either vertically or

horizontally that its velocity would be checked. This would not only prevent the water from washing out sand and mud, but would cause it to part with the sand or mud brought in with it, so that every year the substratum would become more and more impermeable, like an old filter.

Next, after adding to the width, it was necessary to give additional solidity to the whole work. A solid bed of Portland cement concrete 4 ft. thick (in parts 6 ft. thick) was therefore placed over the old flooring; and to cover this under the arches and down-stream, where the action was most severe, a heavy pavement of dressed Trieste stone was put down, with rubble limestone masonry upstream. A line of sheet piling 16 ft. deep was carried across the whole river 85 ft. above the bridge.

During the whole process of restoration the barrage had to be used. We have seen that it had been brought into partial use as far back as 1884. "It was like mending a watch and never stopping the works," wrote Colonel Scott Moncrieff, from whose memorandum this description is in part abridged. "The working season was very short, from the end of November to the end of June, when another Nile flood was to be prepared for. The whole stream could not be shut off from either branch at the same time; and as in one working season the whole of either barrage could not be repaired, the work divided itself into four consecutive seasons, half a barrage each season." In June, 1890, after innumerable disappointments, and surprises of sudden springs breaking out daily in fresh places, the repair of either barrage was completed, and the structure could be counted on to hold up 4 metres, or 13 ft. The foundations were afterwards further consolidated by forcing cement grout, under the pressure of its own weight in bores 50 ft. high, into and under the

defective bottom layers of the floor. The bores, by which the cement grout was introduced, were made in the thickness of the masonry piers from roadway level, five bores being so made in the length of each pier. Between 1891 and 1898 the efficiency of the barrage was further strengthened, and its safety greatly assured, by the construction of weirs at a short distance down-stream. These weirs hold up at lowest water 10 ft. 8 in., or  $3\frac{1}{4}$  metres; and the barrage may be called upon to hold up 9 ft. 9 in. (3 metres only). While the possible heading up, therefore, has been increased by the action of the weirs from 13 ft. to 20 ft. 5 in. (4 to  $6\frac{1}{4}$  metres), the barrage itself is required to hold up only 9 ft. 9 in.

The barrage restoration cost in round figures £E.470,000. In the five years ending 1889 it was estimated that the annual benefit to the country had been not less than £E.835,000, and this while the barrage was as yet incomplete.

The barrage rests on no firm rock or gravel foundations, but simply on the alluvial deposit of the Delta. "Have we to fear, then, the fate proverbially reserved for him that builds on sand?" writes Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff. "I think not," he replies; "only, constant watchfulness must be exercised, more even than in the case of ordinary hydraulic works. . . . While the barrage may be pronounced a sound, reliable work, so long as it is carefully watched, and repairs always effected as they are required, it would be madness to cease this careful surveillance." The barrage, in a word, is a replica of the British position in Egypt. It initiated in French action. It is built upon unstable foundations; yet, with constant caution, they can be regarded as secure. It is essential, in the interests of the population, that the barrage should be placed under the care of Europeans. It is patchwork, but brilliant patchwork. It holds up

the vitalizing forces of the country, and distributes them to the best advantage. It adds immensely to the prosperity of the country, and it regulates the distribution of wealth. So truly is the Nile Egypt, and Egypt the Nile.

In 1897 and 1898 the old piers of the Rosetta branch were found to contain cavities of disquieting dimensions. Cement grouting was poured into these. It was partly in consequence of this discovery that the two subsidiary weirs down-stream were constructed, of which mention has been made. The estimate of the cost of their construction was £E.530,000.

Two essential and subordinate works had been carried out in connexion with the barrage. It had been intended by its means to divert the water from the river into three main canals to irrigate all Lower Egypt. Of these three, the centre canal, known as the Menufieh Canal, had been made when the barrage was first constructed. It irrigates the two central provinces of Menufieh and Gharbieh. But, owing to the absence of a head lock, it was nearly useless for irrigation. This lock was added at a further cost of £E.15,222 in 1887 and 1888. The western Delta canal—the Behera—had been dug when the barrage was under construction, but had been wholly neglected. Drift-sand entered it in quantities where it passed through a strip of desert. It was now dredged, and its head sluices repaired. Grasses and willows were sown on its western bank, sand-screens were erected, and a portion of the desert was put under irrigation, in order to deposit a layer of Nile mud on the drifting sand. The canal to irrigate the eastern Delta—known now as the Tewfikia Canal—had not been made at the time of the construction of the barrage. It was constructed in 1887–9, at a cost of £E.372,000, and was opened on February 11th, 1890.



In 1893 the project of construction of a huge Nile reservoir by damming the Nile at the first cataract at Assouan began to be seriously considered. For some years the project had been under examination by the irrigation officers; and their report, with a project prepared and designed by Mr. Willcocks, was now placed in the hands of an international commission composed of Sir Benjamin Baker, M. Boulé, and M. Torricelli. The project, to which we shall return, was finally accepted a few years later.

Mr. Scott, it has been seen, took over the care of the Tribunals in 1890. Three years later he was able to report that the administration of justice was in a fair way of improvement. With the aid of his coadjutors and inspectors at the Ministry of Justice he had as far as possible eliminated the ignorant element on the Bench, and had given life and vigour to the School of Law. The existing system of judicial appointments was reorganized, with a view to ensuring a competent knowledge of law and of Arabic in candidates, and unbiassed selection in those whose duty it would be to select judges from among them. Summary justice courts—both civil and criminal—were established. Summary civil judges were given jurisdiction in land and personalty up to £E.100, and relieved the Tribunals of First Instance of half their work. On the penal side these criminal courts took cognizance of all *délits* and *contraventions*; the former being analogous to our misdemeanours, the latter to offences against by-laws. Only cases of crime went to the Tribunals—now reduced each to three judges. A Committee of Judicial Control was established, whose powers did not extend to those of a court of appeal, for it did not interfere with any particular judgment or sentence, but aimed chiefly at maintaining, by vigilant supervision, general purity of decision and sound interpretation of law.

Every tribunal was in turn visited, files were examined, and care was taken that arrears should not accumulate. Rules were for the first time established for the admission of advocates and pleaders, and no one was allowed to act in either capacity without a legal diploma and proof of respectability. All court houses were supplied with good law libraries. A commencement was made in the provision of further court houses—not, it would seem, before it was needed, for Mr. Scott, on a visit to a town of considerable and rising importance in the Delta, found judge, parquet, greffier, huissier, and guard, all crowded into the little waiting-room of a roadside station as their only court house. The parties to twenty cases that awaited hearing were kept waiting outside on the railway platform.

The summary justice courts above referred to were composed of one judge, taken from among the judges of the Courts of First Instance. The number of Tribunals of First Instance somewhat varied, but there have been seven now for many years past. The judges are almost all Egyptian; in Cairo only are there three Europeans. The foreign judges who had been appointed in 1883 and 1884 have almost without exception returned to their several homes. In the Court of Appeal the number of judges was increased by Mr. Scott in 1896 from seven to ten. [This court was ultimately composed of twenty-seven members—ten European and seventeen Egyptian.] Neither in the Court of Appeal nor in the Tribunals of First Instance were there arrears. Organic changes of this kind were all that the Judicial Adviser could be expected to carry out; the effective working of a country's courts of justice must come from the existence of a competent Bench and Bar, corresponding in public spirit and in moral tone to the high standard of the general community. Simple and almost elementary as were some

of Mr. Scott's reforms, they provoked in many cases strenuous opposition ; and although now fully established, they were not enforced and brought into practice without considerable difficulty.

## CHAPTER XVII

### INTERNAL PROGRESS AND REFORM

Cadastral survey—Land Revenue Commission—Area of land held by various classes of proprietors—Appointment of Adviser in Ministry of Interior.

THE village and field survey had been introduced in 1879, and suspended five months later, at the fall of Ismail Pasha. It was revived, under a survey officer from Bombay; but for a second time fell into abeyance in 1888, when it was suppressed under the regime of economy in that year, to be finally resuscitated in 1892. Work was resumed, but at first tentatively. This survey laboured from the beginning under one great disadvantage. There had never been a complete survey of Egypt in any form; there existed no triangulation into which local surveys could be fitted; a scientific base-line had never been measured. The village and field survey consisted of a series of detached village maps, which, however sufficiently they might meet revenue purposes, did not join together with scientific accuracy, and did not fit into any larger whole. This survey was now to be worked into the topographical survey, based on triangulation, which had been recently commenced. The triangles would serve as a framework for piecing together accurately the village maps.

Where there are no temporary settlements of land revenue, which are liable, as in India, to revision, after a prescribed term, at the close of which a fresh valuation of assets



is made, and a reassessment of the Government share is effected, village maps are not absolutely indispensable. Whatever their other uses may be, they are not required for fiscal valuation. Hence, for example, until of late years, in contrast with all other provinces of India, there had been no general field survey in permanently settled Bengal. In Egypt, where the land revenue is not liable to periodical revision, the want of these maps was felt mainly by canal officers. It was found, too, that fresh land was brought under cultivation, but not under assessment. Government lands were encroached upon. Thus in the four years 1892-5 £E.128,154 of land revenue was collected on account of 42,355 feddans,<sup>1</sup> which thus came to light and were sold; the cost of the survey, through which they were identified, being £E.56,078. The want of a record of landed rights based on an accurate survey had also begun to be felt. There had existed, before the reign of Ismail Pasha, village records of rights, and a village accountant, known as the Saráf, very much as these are now to be found in British India. But the village records were not based on maps, and were not accurately kept up. The record now made at time of survey is based, as in India, on possession; disputed claims not based on possession must be established in the Courts. Such a record, if carefully maintained, will become valuable *prima facie* evidence of title, and will always be an authentic record of proprietary holdings; but there seems to be no trace of tenant right in Egypt. Further notice of the progress of survey operations will be found on a later page.

Space does not admit of more than a rapid glance at other measures which were adopted between 1890 and 1896. A Land Revenue Commission was nominated in

<sup>1</sup> The feddan is 4200 square metres, and is about equivalent to an acre.

1895 to examine into the incidence of the Land Revenue assessment, as then existing. Prior to the commencement of work, a notice was issued from the Government to the effect that the aggregate amount of land-tax at that time collected would not be increased. There were at that time 5,237,000 feddans of land in Egypt assessed to land revenue. The total amount of revenue due on those lands was £E.4,780,000. It was announced that the total amount would remain fixed; redistribution, not general enhancement, was the object. In no single case would the existing maximum of P.T.164 per feddan be exceeded. Ten Commissions commenced work, guided by a careful code of rules, under a British Director-General, who at that time was Mr. Willcocks. There were in each Commission two official members (one of whom was a European) and two non-official, who were selected by the Mudirs from among a number of landed proprietors elected by representative landed proprietors. When this Commission of preliminary inquiry had completed its labours, which it was calculated would last about two years, the work of re-assessment would be taken in hand.

The division of landed property among the various classes was as follows, later, in 1900:—

				No. of Owners.		Acres.
5 acres and less than 5 acres				761,337	...	1,113,411
5	to	10	..	80,171	...	560,195
10	to	20	..	39,710	...	550,774
20	to	30	..	12,267	...	301,334
30	to	50	..	8,990	...	344,765
	Over	50	..	11,939	...	2,243,573
Total				914,414		5,114,052

Over two-fifths of the land was held by only 11,939 of a total of 914,414 proprietors, each of them possessing more

than 50 acres; while 761,337 small proprietors possessed five acres or less than five acres; the average of their holdings being a little less than one acre and a half.

A fresh and final departure in respect to the much-troubled police system was made in the end of 1894. After the final retirement of Riyaz Pasha in 1894, Nubar Pasha returned to office for a few months, and was no sooner installed than he returned to the police question. This time he succeeded, not, indeed, in handing the police over without effective control to the Mudirs, but in obtaining the withdrawal of the British Inspectors established in the interior, and in abolishing the British Inspector-General. The price which he paid for success was the subjection of the Mudirs, no less than of the police who were handed back to them, to effective control from a British Adviser, who was now for the first time installed in the Ministry of the Interior. Mr. (later Sir Eldon) Gorst, subsequently Financial Adviser, who had been appointed from the diplomatic staff of the Agency to the office of Controller of Direct Taxation, was the officer selected for the post. Whether this final solution of the long struggle was wholly agreeable to the Prime Minister, who had thus been the means of introducing foreign control into the Ministry of the Interior, may be doubted. But the settlement then made lasts to this hour, and has worked as well as any system can be expected to work where head and hand belong to different bodies, and are of different complexion. There is no department in which "sympathetic advice and assistance" are less likely to prove effective substitutes for direct control than that of the police, where intelligence and promptness of execution in all ranks are of the first importance; and where less perhaps depends on the issue of instructions than on their

supervision and execution. The Mudir is probably the weakest link in the present chain; but as younger and better educated men are in time entrusted with the Mudiriyehs, this defect may by slow degrees be lessened.

It may be as well to explain, in the Agent's own words, the change that was effected in 1894. They are to be found in the course of his report for that year: "The original theory on which it was attempted to work the system of police that existed heretofore consisted in the organization under English officers of an efficient body of armed men, to be placed at the disposal of the Mudirs for the preservation of public security. In practice, however, it was impossible for Englishmen not to insist upon seeing that the instrument they had created was not misused. They had little or no control over the Mudir. Consequently, there was an increasing tendency to push that functionary on one side, and work the police directly from headquarters. The provincial police gradually assumed a semi-independent position towards the Mudir, which impaired the prestige of the latter, and divided the responsibility for the preservation of public security. In a word, the dualism—to use Nubar Pasha's favourite term—which is a necessary consequence of the British occupation, instead of being restricted as in other Administrations, to a few high English officials and native Ministers, displayed itself at the other end of the administrative hierarchy, between native local officials, relying on the support of their English chiefs at headquarters, and other local officials who should naturally have been their immediate superiors. It is incontestable that, under this system, much good work has been done, and a great improvement effected in the public security in the country. The parts of the machine were, however, displaced from their normal position, with the result that



there was a maximum of friction for the amount of work done."

The main features of the new arrangement are then described as follows:—

1. The post of Inspector-General of Police was abolished, and the various services centralized under this official were divided, and placed under the direct orders of the Minister of the Interior.

2. The English Police Inspectors living in the provinces in charge of fixed districts were recalled. In their place, a few English Inspectors were attached to the Ministry of the Interior; one or two to inspect the discipline and interior economy of the police force, the rest to examine and report upon the manner in which the Mudirs and other local officials performed their duties.

3. The provincial police was placed, practically as well as theoretically, under the control of the local civil authorities, who were in future solely responsible for the maintenance of public security.

4. An English Adviser was attached to the Ministry of the Interior. This official was to have no executive functions, but was to have the right to be kept fully informed of all the affairs of the Ministry, and to obtain all information he might consider necessary for the efficient discharge of his duties.

At the same time the responsibility of the village headmen (omdeh) was again enforced, and the village police (ghafir) were reorganized. No judicial powers were conferred on the Mudir. Redistribution of the Parquet also took place. A *chef du parquet* was appointed to each province, at the locale of each Court of First Instance. To strengthen the upper ranks of the police force, that is, the officers and non-commissioned officers, a school was established in 1894, first at the Abdin barracks, and later,

in 1899, at Boulak. The course of instruction in this school for officers extends to one year. The number of cadet officers at this school was in 1894-5 forty, and 160 selected candidates are also, at the present time, under training for a period of six months with a view to their appointment as non-commissioned officers and constables. In 1905-6 sixty officer cadets and 300 constable cadets were under instruction. The cadets leave the school well instructed in the rules of criminal investigation, and are thoroughly grounded in all police and administrative regulations, every endeavour being made to combine practice with theory. The physique of the cadet is developed by a complete system of free gymnastics. Besides the instruction they receive in law, and in administrative and financial duties, they are taught to shoot, ride, and to clean horses and saddlery. Preference is given to holders of certificates by the Department of Public Instruction as to having passed the secondary examination. Finally, plans of a new building are being prepared ; which, when completed, will hold sixty cadet officers and 600 to 700 cadet constables. The former will remain two years, and the constable cadets six months in the school. Hitherto, constables have been taken from soldiers of the reserve, which was in practice found to be inconvenient. The scheme is in the very competent hands of Mr. Machell, now Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, and formerly one of the most distinguished officers of the Egyptian army. The police who are trained in this Boulak school will carry away with them the impress of his personality.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DIFFICULTIES OF ADMINISTRATION PECULIAR TO THE BRITISH POSITION IN EGYPT—THE CAPITULATIONS

Anomalous position of British officials in Egypt—Organization of provincial and central civil service—British civil service also formed—Analogy to Egypt of Court of Wards estates in India—Characteristics of foreign population in Egypt—The British colony—Origin and character of the Capitulations—Abuses connected with Consular Tribunals—Capitulations no longer required in Egypt.

IN carrying out measures of reform in Egypt the advisers of the Government and the executive have always been hampered in a hundred ways by their anomalous position. As delegates and agents of the Khedivial authority, they are as much bound as though they were turbaned Turks, by all the meshes which embarrass the relations of the Sultan's officials with the subjects of the Christian Powers. As Christians, on the other hand, they are warned off all ground of which the soil is religious, and jealously excluded from handling any questions which concern the pretensions of Islam. Lord Cromer and the staff of British officials are thus blocked respectively by the Capitulations and the Shariyeh, and find themselves, in nautical parlance, between the devil and the deep sea. But that has been but a part of their difficulty. The Ministers were Egyptian; the head of the Ministry was not infrequently in opposition to them. The British officials corresponded with one another officially in French. The law administered

in Egyptian Tribunals was based upon French law, and was wholly unfamiliar to them. *Vis inertiae* met them everywhere in the provinces. Yet they had ever to remember that, in Lord Dufferin's words, they were not "to allow the influence which the progress of events had required them to exercise, to degenerate into an irritating and exasperating display of authority." This was the more difficult because the native agency through which they had to work was for the most part wholly untrained, and without enthusiasm or interest in its duties. They could not, except in one or two departments, assume direct control of administration; but were compelled to be content with seeing others, of whose efficiency and probity they often had the greatest doubt, entrusted with the supervision and execution of instructions which required promptness, intelligence, and honest handling. *Qui facit per alium, facit per se*, is no administrative maxim. Hence the European advisers, under-secretaries, or what not, tried to remedy the defects of their agents in the Provinces by centralization at headquarters. The remedy was, perhaps, better than the disease; but it was a remedy which, if persisted in, would effectively prevent the growth of administrative capacity in the Provinces. Prior to 1892 a civil service, enrolled as a distinct public body, did not exist. Favour or chance brought men into the ranks of the public service; to favour or chance they owed their promotion; while the sun shone, they made the most of their opportunities; when the shadows descended on them, they found them not unprepared. In 1892 a provincial service was organized, and a few months later the service which supplies the central administration of the State was similarly embodied. The civil service was divided into an upper and a lower division. For the former a certificate of having passed the secondary education standard was



necessary, preference being accorded to candidates possessing a diploma in one of the higher Government schools or in Europe. For the lower division a certificate of having passed the standard of primary education sufficed. Later, a European civil service, modest in numbers, but of excellent quality, was organized for Egypt and for the Soudan.

There is much in the position of the administration in Egypt which recalls the familiar case of an encumbered Indian estate, of which the management has been assumed by the Government as the Court of Wards. The proprietor, to save his estate from his creditors, calls in the Court's assistance. The land, the tenants, the fixtures are the landlord's, but the controlling hand henceforth is that of a stranger. The necessities and exactions which led to Government interference are soon forgotten in dislike to its presence. Local feeling, even among those whom the defaulter habitually squeezed, is by no means as inimical to him as in the days when he was himself manager. The subordinate agents through whom the Court works are old servants or kinsmen of the defaulter. To them must be entrusted the interpretation of Government instructions, for they alone are immediately in contact with the tenants. Innovation is resented and old irregularities are condoned, alike by agents and by cultivators. The administrator is constantly running counter to some local prejudice, some treasured custom, some valued privilege or undue indulgence. Sympathetic advice is apt to be resented, as coming from an external source; improvements, inasmuch as they involve change, are viewed with suspicion, even by those who benefit. Though the loosely ordered system of former days is replaced by regularity and method, the rigid routine needful to that end is irksome to the majority of those who profit by it. Reforms and economies

are alike made in the interest of the landlord; but the more successful the new manager, the less room does there seem for the old master. Though his debts have been paid and he lives again in comfort, there is an end of the authority which he abused, and of the independence of which the exercise ruined him. As the new order gains in stability, his own hold on his tenants weakens; and while his property is developing into a model estate, he himself is losing weight and consideration.

In the work of Egyptian reform much assistance could not be looked for from the Europeans in Egypt. Many were actively hostile; the majority were, at the best, cold and critical. Greeks and Italians were friendly, but these are not the colonies which most influence opinion in Cairo. In Egypt, too, as elsewhere in the Levant, the European is *sui generis*. He has been brought up under that worst of all possible regimes, the Capitulations. His chief business is the acquisition of wealth, which is usually the most engrossing of pursuits; his amusements and distractions are those of an enervating climate. Almost domiciled in a strange land, he yet prizes above all things his nationality, which throws over him the ægis of its protection. Living on privileged terms among the people of the country, he does not feel the pressure of their needs, nor the yoke of maladministration. Though active in industrial enterprise, he takes no share in the defence of the country in which he lives; he claims exemption from its tribunals and from most of its taxation; he has no part in the direct administration of its affairs; and he feels interested in them only so far as they affect his personal or pecuniary interests. The presence of a numerous and powerful but independent foreign body of this nature in Egypt, enjoying privileges, but claiming exemption from public burdens and duties, adds enormously to

the difficulties of administration. British administrators, under the British flag, would have little trouble in dealing with such an element; but weighted by the Capitulations, they are at times almost powerless to control it.

With the growth of time and enterprise the colony of our own countrymen increased in Egypt, where their presence added strength to the Administration. But the Britisher brings, with the loyalty and energy of his nation, its aptitude for finding objection. Abroad or at home, your Briton is a confirmed grumbler; and while he is rarely profuse in his acknowledgment of benefits received, he freely unbosoms himself to the public when his soul is vexed with a grievance. Egyptian and foreign malcontents are naturally pleased when they see their ranks swelled by "An Egyptian Onlooker," or "One Who Knows," or "An Old Egyptian," or whatever the pseudonym may be under which the burden of the Briton's wrath is delivered. But the writer rarely asks himself whether methods habitual to him in his own country may be equally desirable in a less sympathetic society; and, with admirable unconsciousness, he places his services at the disposal of those from whose co-operation, were it offered him, he would instinctively shrink; and with whose aims, were he asked to adopt them, he would be the first to repudiate sympathy.

It has been noticed that to add to their other difficulties, our countrymen in the service of the Khedive have always to contend with the direct or indirect influence of the Capitulations. A few lines are needed as to the origin and development of these institutions, in order to illustrate their bearing on the position. The immunities granted to Europeans by the Capitulations within the Sultan's dominions date, in the case of one European



country, as far back as A.D. 1150; those granted to England were accorded in A.D. 1579. Their object was to enable Christians (or Europeans, the terms being practically synonymous) to live in security within the dominions of the Sultan, who in those far-off days was a powerful European monarch. The majority of Capitulations were granted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the Christian was regarded by the Moslem as a man of inferior class, who, though he might be tolerated, could be regarded only as a trader and inferior. Times have altered since then; and concessions which, at the time they were made, were viewed as immunities without which the Christian would be continually exposed to the bigotry or the violence of the Muhammadan—concessions which were contemptuously and as of grace conferred upon the Christian trader or traveller—have now become the cornerstone of the castle within which his successors retain, and from which they defy, the power that of old conferred them. These concessions have grown, in the course of time, into privileges, on which the European in the Sultan's dominions bases a claim to be regarded as a member of a favoured class. By virtue of the grace contemptuously accorded him in former days by the Turk, he now asserts his right to be exempt from the civil and criminal jurisdiction of Muhammadan Tribunals, and to carry with him wherever he goes an *imperium in imperio*, a national divinity, which hedges him as a king.

The provisions of the Capitulations have in course of time been amplified and enlarged, but originally they were as follows:—

1. Access for foreigners to Moslem territory, with permission to trade, but not to practise any calling or profession, nor hold lands.
2. Religious freedom.



3. Exemption from taxation, other than duties on merchandise.

4. The right of foreigners, in disputes among themselves, to be judged by their own Ambassadors and their own Consuls.

5. The presence of the Consular Dragoman, or interpreter, before an Ottoman judge, in civil causes between natives and foreigners.

6. In crimes and offences committed by foreigners against natives, the competent judge to be the Consul for the defendant, not the local Tribunal.

7. Inviolability of the foreigner's domicile. In cases of urgency, Government officers might not enter the dwelling-house of a foreign delinquent without having previously notified the Ambassador or Consul, and being accompanied by his Deputy. Readers of this volume will recall the alleged infringement of this privilege in the case of the "Bosphore Egyptien."

8. Freedom of bequest.

9. Prohibition to Ambassadors and Consuls to give protection to Ottoman subjects in Ottoman territory.

For many centuries Europeans in the Sultan's dominions were few, and by the aid of bribery, cajoling, and occasional menace, they lived in tolerable security and comfort. But gradually, aided by the introduction of steam, the intercourse between Turk and foreigner became more frequent; and since the period of the Crimean War, or 1854-5, their relations have greatly increased. But while, with the growth of commercial and personal relations, the various Powers arranged for the improvement of justice as between their several subjects and Turkish subjects, all Europeans alike united in claiming absolute exemption from the jurisdiction of Turkish Tribunals, so that every man's house was literally his castle, so far as Turkish process

or Turkish entry was concerned ; and while he remained on good terms with his Consul every foreigner could snap his fingers at the united strength of the whole of the Turkish Empire.

In Egypt, so far as civil cases were concerned, the Mixed Tribunals had in 1876 superseded the old Consular Tribunals. The Consuls were partly judges, partly political officers. There existed seventeen Consulates in Egypt, and the administration of justice in civil cases as between Europeans, still more as between Europeans and natives, had become a scandal of the first magnitude. The Mixed Courts have no criminal jurisdiction. Criminal jurisdiction over Europeans is exercised by the Consular Court of the Power to which the defendant is subject. Except in cases of emergency, such as that of a murder or burglary actually in course of proceeding, the Egyptian police cannot enter the house of a foreigner without the presence of a Consular delegate. The criminal arrested, his Consul deals with him according to the laws of his country. Within narrow limits, the Consul may himself proceed to trial and sentence ; from this sentence an appeal lies to a Court situated in the defendant's domicile. In serious cases the Consul proceeds to a trial, but the evidence is sent with the prisoner to a Court in Europe. The British Consular Tribunal has, however, full jurisdiction.

The abuses of such a system in police administration and in the administration of criminal law are, of course, endless. Should the Consul choose to make difficulties, the gambling-hell, the house of ill fame, the smuggler's *cache*, are alike inaccessible to the police. Promptness of action, which is all-important in police matters, is paralysed. Delay in the Consular Courts, and uncertainty as to the offender's punishment after his removal from Egypt, alike militate against the exemplary effect

of punishment on the rest of the European community.

In Turkey, with a system of Muhammadan law administered by Muhammadan officials, the Capitulations may be necessary. In Egypt, with its civilized codes, applied under British control, they prove a source of serious difficulty. Should Europeans, attracted, for example, by gold-mining, crowd in increasing numbers into Egypt, it will be impossible to maintain order unless, within definite areas, the Capitulations are cancelled, modified, or suspended. But such a measure must be accompanied by confidence in the Egyptian Tribunals whose strengthening becomes, therefore, a matter of pressing importance.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH

Death of Tewfik Pasha—His successor—Characteristics of Tewfik—His sound judgment—His estimate of his position—Abbás Hilmi—Ill-feeling of Egyptians towards British from 1893 to 1898—Lord Rosebery's despatch of February 16th, 1893—Comments on the present situation—Contract for construction of the Assouan dam and reservoir—Cost—Benefit to Egypt—The Assiut and Zifta barrages—Their object.

SINCE the repulse of the Dervish invasion in 1889, and the death of its leader, the chief seat in Cairo itself had become vacant. Tewfik Pasha, the Khedive, had died very suddenly on January 7th, 1892, and had been succeeded by his eldest son, Prince Abbás Hilmi. Experience soon proved how great had been the loss to Egypt. Tewfik Pasha had learned in the school of adversity. Disliked and despised as he was by his father, threatened with dethronement by his people, restored by foreign bayonets, and exercising authority within narrowly circumscribed limits, his career presented little that seemed enviable. But he had faced his troubles with an easy indifference which robbed them of half their bitterness. Probably, like most Muhammadans, a fatalist, he was of a calm and constant mind in all that concerned his position and prospects. His character has been sketched on a preceding page, and much as he was in 1883 he remained till 1891. But his views had been enlarged, and his self-reliance strengthened, by the part he had played in public affairs. His attitude towards British administration was always



correct ; his relations with individual members of the community were often very friendly. He was not wholly free from the Oriental disposition to chicane, which his peculiar position may have encouraged ; but when he was called on to decide broad issues, or to confront great difficulties, he saw his way rapidly to a right conclusion. He well maintained the dignity of his high position, for example, when, on the eve of the bombardment of Alexandria, he was invited to take refuge on the decks of a British man-of-war. He replied to that proposal without hesitation, that "if he sheltered himself on board a war vessel, whose guns were trained on the forts of his country, he could never again show his face in Egypt." So he retired, guarded only by mutinous soldiers, to Ramleh, in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, whence few of those who bade him farewell expected that he would be permitted to return.

It is matter of common knowledge that the good relations which had existed between Tewfik Pasha and Her Majesty's representative in Egypt did not long continue to characterize the rule of Abbás Hilmi. Tewfik Pasha had passed through the fire, and the memory of 1882 was burned into his soul. He had stood face to face with rebellious Egypt ; when he found his position secured and his dynasty maintained, he never forgot for a moment that he owed his salvation to Great Britain. He was well aware, too, that his Egyptian soldiers were no match for the Dervishes ; and that if the Khedivate rested for support on Great Britain, all Egypt was equally indebted to that Power for deliverance from the scourge of the Khalifa.

Abbás Hilmi Pasha was mainly educated away from his own country ; and if he came back with illusions as to the rôle that he was to play, or as to the support which he might count upon from his subjects, the fact that he knew



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little of either may explain his early indiscretions. While no useful end would be served by recalling the incidents of 1893 and 1894, their deplorable effects on the relations between the British officials and the Khedive's subjects cannot be passed over wholly in silence. There was, in truth, no little uneasiness throughout Egypt for so long an interval as six years, from 1893, that is to say, to 1898. "As it was in the days of Arábi, so is it now," said an Egyptian of the people to an English friend, who, in 1898, was revisiting Egypt for the first time since the disturbances.

Hostility to the foreign element in the administration, and sullen opposition to its men and measures, showed themselves everywhere after the coming of Khedive Abbás. Public servants of all grades reflected the heat emanating from the Palace ; the pashas sunned themselves in its rays ; the servile soul of the effendi succumbed to it ; and the fellah, who remembered well its scorching power, took refuge from it with Allah. The country was divided into Anglophobes and Anglophiles, if that can be called division where the preponderance is overwhelmingly on one side. So keen was the feeling of unrest that the British garrison was reinforced. It was a good occasion for the malcontent foreign element in Egypt, and we may be sure that the most was made of it. The English classes in the Government schools were gradually deserted, and the scholars crowded the benches of the French instructors. After the collapse of the Khalifa, and the joint occupation of Omdurman, the symptoms of disturbance suddenly disappeared. *Hodie mihi, cras tibi*, was the message from Omdurman to Cairo ; and those to whom it was addressed duly profited by the instruction.

Since 1898, matters have resumed their old complexion ; and if the present Khedive does not tread in the footsteps



of his father, there is little in his attitude to invite criticism. On more than one occasion, of late, Abbás Hilmi has been the honoured guest of Great Britain, whence he may have taken away with him a pleasant remembrance of the warmth of his reception, and an adequate impression of the strength behind it. The vigour which he has inherited from his grandfather characterizes the management of his personal estates.

In his remarkable despatch of February 16th, 1893, Lord Rosebery, after dealing with incidents which it is needless to recall, laid down in his concluding paragraphs the principles which govern British policy in Egypt, and the grounds on which a military occupation of that country by British troops is maintained. He wrote :—

“Should further difficulties arise, it might be urged that the conditions of the British occupation will have changed, and it may be asked whether altered circumstances do not require a corresponding modification of policy; whether the occupation should be maintained in opposition, as it might seem, to the sentiment of an important section of the inhabitants, and whether it would not be better that it should cease.

“To this view, however, certain elementary considerations oppose themselves. Firstly, it is necessary to consider the important interests, and indeed the safety, of the large European community in Egypt. Secondly, it is by no means clear that the real feeling, even of the native population in the country, is otherwise than friendly and grateful, although it may be difficult to elicit any public or decisive expression of it. It would not be right or proper that the policy of this country, based on considerations of permanent importance, should be modified in deference to hasty personal impulse or to ephemeral agitation among certain classes. Thirdly, it seems impossible lightly, and on the first appearance of difficulties, to retire from the task which was publicly undertaken in the

general interest of Europe and civilization, and to abandon the results of ten years of successful effort in that direction. And, fourthly, the withdrawal of the British troops under such circumstances would too probably result in a speedy return to the former corrupt and defective systems of administration, and be followed by a relapse into confusion which would necessitate a fresh intervention under still more difficult circumstances, though it is not now necessary to discuss the particular form which that intervention might assume.

"All these considerations point to the conclusion that for the present there is but one course to pursue; that we must maintain the fabric of administration which has been constructed under our guidance, and must continue the process of construction without impatience, but without interruption, of an administrative and judicial system which shall afford a reliable guarantee for the future welfare of Egypt.

"Circumstances might, indeed, occur of the nature I have indicated which might render it necessary to consider the expediency of fresh consultations with the Suzerain and with the European powers. It would serve no useful purpose to discuss at this moment the proposals which it might, in that case, be desirable to bring forward, nor need we attempt to forecast the result. But this at least may be laid down with absolute certainty; that Egypt would in no case be released from European control, which might possibly be asserted in a much more stringent and irksome form than at present."

It would be too much to hope that the paramount influence of a Christian Power should be popular in a Muhammadan dependency of Turkey. But those who are in high places in Cairo may remember that if the influence of Great Britain is supreme in Egypt to-day, it is the Khedivate and Pashadom which share the responsibility. Habitual neglect of their duties by the privileged classes,

craven subservience to their former master, persistent abuse of their own authority, and absolute disregard of the claims of the masses, led in no less degree than the extravagance of Ismail Pasha, or the presumption of Arábi, to the introduction of a foreign element into the Administration. Nor did interference occur, until the rule of the Turk was shattered by the hands of his Egyptian subjects. Even when intervention had become inevitable, it was exercised in favour of the Khedive and his Turks. But for that intervention the Khedive and his countrymen would have alike been ousted. The present position of affairs is, no doubt, in a high degree anomalous. Its duration must depend in great measure on the circumspection of those who are principally concerned. But since the accession of Khedive Abbás Hilmi, two important factors have been created, which have gone far to modify the situation as he received it from his father. The British flag floats in the Soudan beside the Egyptian standard; and all Europe, following the lead of France, has recognized the paramount interest of Great Britain in Egypt. The significance of the first factor speaks for itself. As to the other, the first Article of the Agreement of April 8th, 1904, lays down that while Great Britain has no intention of altering the political status of Egypt, the Government of the French Republic declares for its part that it will not obstruct the action of Great Britain in that country by asking that a limit of time be fixed for the British occupation, or in any other manner.

Whatever may be on the knees of the gods, it is certain that the days of absolute authority in Egypt are over. Never can another Khedive be entrusted with the unfettered powers of Ismail. It is equally certain that no unaided Turkish or Egyptian authority, limited or unlimited, can control the congeries of European peoples



who swarm between Alexandria and the First Cataract. There is no native force, nor collection of native forces in Egypt, that could make head against the impact of European influence and energy within its borders, supported and strengthened by the Mixed Tribunals and by the Consular jurisdiction. The country has become too Europeanized to be administered without European aid. In the interests of all Europe there must be peace and prosperity in Egypt; no repetition of 1879 or of 1882 can be risked. As the Turk cannot successfully administer the country in its present state of industrial and social development, he shares the administration with those who can guide him, and who at the same time can ensure order and control the troublous elements within its borders. The Turk in Egypt will be well advised to recognize that the Egyptian and European interests now engaged there are scarcely less important than his own; and that, whoever might benefit by disturbance of the existing pact, his order might very possibly be the first to suffer. Happily, although the position may be one of unstable equilibrium, it does not seem to be in the interest of either of the parties principally concerned to bring about disturbance.

"For the present," writes Lord Cromer in the closing words of his annual report for 1898, "what Egypt most requires, and for many years to come will require, is an honest, just, and orderly administration, and the establishment of the supremacy of the law in the widest sense of the term, on so firm a footing as to render practically impossible any return to that personal form of government which, twenty years ago, was well-nigh the ruin of the country, as it has been that of so many Oriental states. It is conceivable that, at some future time, the Egyptian question may pass from the administrative into the political stage, and that a moment may arrive when the method of



government may be discussed with advantage to all interests. For the present, however, that moment would appear to be distant."

The year 1896 was one of the most eventful years in the annals of Egypt. It witnessed the maturing of the decision to construct the Assouan dam, by which the wealth of Egypt was to be so largely increased; and it saw the first steps taken in the long march southward of the Anglo-Egyptian forces, which, commencing at Cairo in March, 1896, was terminated in September, 1898, at Omdurman.

It had become of the first necessity in 1896 to increase the water-supply from the Nile. Nearly all that could be done with the present supply of Nile water had been accomplished. It was barely sufficient for the land then under cultivation; unless timely measures were taken to increase it, fresh lands coming under cultivation would not receive water, and a check would be given to the increasing prosperity of the country. It was also urgently sought to change the system in Middle Egypt (from Assiut to Cairo) from basin to perennial irrigation. Mr. Willcocks' project of a large reservoir and dam at Assouan, which had been made over, in 1893, to an international commission, was accepted with various modifications; and on February 20th, 1898, a contract was definitely signed between the Egyptian Government and Messrs. Aird, by which the contractors pledged themselves to complete the work in five years from the 1st of July, 1898. The Egyptian Government agreed to pay for the work by half-yearly instalments of £76,648, extending over a period of thirty years from July 1st, 1903. Had the hands of the Egyptian Government been free financially and unrestricted by international bonds, the work would have been constructed

on much more favourable terms. Some details as to the reservoir and the character of the dam will be found in Appendix I, and, at a later page, the completion of the work is noted.

In order the better to distribute the increased water-supply, which would be obtained by the construction of this reservoir, barrages were also undertaken at Assiut, in Upper Egypt, and at Zifta, in the Delta. The cost of these three works, and of others dependent on them, is reckoned by Colonel Sir Hanbury Brown, R.E., in a paper read in 1905 at the International Engineering Congress, to amount, when all will have been completed, approximately to the following sums:—

	£
Assouan Dam and Reservoir. . .	2,500,000
Assiut Barrage and Works . . .	1,000,000
Zifta „ „ . . .	500,000
Conversion of 451,000 acres in Middle Egypt from basin to perennial irrigation . . .	3,000,000
	<u>£7,000,000</u>

The ultimate annual increase which, after the completion of the dam and reservoir, would accrue to the wealth of the country was estimated by Sir William Garstin, in 1897, at £E.2,608,000, and the direct annual benefit to the State therefrom at £E.378,400, beside additional sums of more than one million to be obtained from the sale of reclaimed lands, and the revenue to be derived from increase in the Customs, and greater traffic on the State Railways.

The Assiut and Zifta barrages do not store water, but distribute the available supply by producing artificial levels in the river, so as to feed the canals dependent upon them. In design they are similar to the barrage below Cairo, but

the Assiut barrage spans the whole undivided river ; the Zifta barrage, one only of the Delta branches. The Assiut barrage feeds the Ibrahimiyeh Canal, which irrigates the sugar-cane and cotton of Middle Egypt ; the Zifta barrage, on the Damietta branch, facilitates the distribution of water in Lower Egypt by feeding the eastern Delta canals, some of which are more than one hundred miles in length, at a fresh point half-way between the Cairo barrage and the sea.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE END OF THE DERVISH RULE

Condition of the Soudan under the Khalifa—Gradual decay of his power—Recapture of Tokar—The Baggáras—The narratives of Father Ohrwalder and Rudolf Slatin—The tribes desert Abdullah—The efficiency of the Egyptian army—Advance on Dongola—Occupation of Berber—Battle of Omdurman—Death of the Khalifa—Zebehr in retirement—Attitude of the Caisse—Doom of Internationalism.

WE turn from these anticipations of prosperity to the horrors of Omdurman, and to the final struggle beyond the southern frontier. Interest in the Soudan revives, and resumes for a moment the chief place. The huge bulk of Central Africa again obtrudes itself, throwing its monstrous shadow over the whole scene.

While Egypt had been recruiting her strength, and recovering herself with extraordinary rapidity, the Soudan was sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss of misery. Since the death of Muhammad Ahmad in 1885, Abdullah, who claimed to be chief of the four Khalifas whom that False Prophet nominated, had maintained himself by unceasing severity and indiscriminating bloodshed. The Khalifa could not hope to exercise over his people the spell with which Muhammad Ahmad had bound them. The pretensions of his predecessor to be regarded as the promised Mahdi had been immensely strengthened by uniform military success, culminating in the crowning triumph at Khartum. But the sudden death of Muhammad Ahmad had raised grave doubts, even in the dim minds of the Ansár, as to whether, after all, this could be the true Mahdi; and although, by dreams and visions, Ab-



dullah affected to keep up direct connexion with the Master, in his own person he had no divine mission to accomplish; nor could his assurances of eternal beatitude to the true believer be accepted without more evidence of authenticity than he was enabled to offer. As time passed it became more and more evident that Abdullah's kingdom was of this world, and that his son Osman was his destined successor. Engaged constantly in battle with his neighbours, Abdullah was by no means always successful. He had lost many of his Amirs in war with Abyssinia; and though he had been permitted the satisfaction of adding the head of John, the Abyssinian king, to the gruesome heap which was accumulating at Omdurman, his attitude towards Abyssinia was on the whole defensive. Kassala had been wrested from him by the Italians. In the Eastern Soudan there had been heavy fighting, and for a short time Suakin had been besieged by Osman Digna and his Hadendowas. But on the 20th of December, 1888, the Dervishes had been driven out of their trenches with great loss, by General Grenfell; and in February, 1891, Colonel (afterwards Sir Charles) Holled Smith reoccupied Tokar. Friendly communication had been established with the Hadendowas and Amaras, the principal tribes in the neighbourhood of Suakin, who ultimately receded from the Khalifa. The Jaalin and Danagla, once the main support of Muhammad Ahmad—he was himself a Dongolawi, a man from the Dongola Province—were kept in subjection only by fear of the Khalifa and of his kinsmen, the Baggára. There had been revolt in Darfur and in Kordofan; black regiments had deserted after proclaiming their allegiance to the Khedive; the sacrosanct family of Muhammad Ahmad had separated itself from Abdullah, and, before the appearance of reconciliation could be effected, blood had been shed.

Although, in the Equatorial Province, whence Emin Pasha found himself forced to retire, there had been some measure of success, year by year the limits of Abdullah's authority were becoming more and more circumscribed. The invasion of Egypt had utterly failed, and it was seen of all that the Khalifa's visions in that regard were vain. He ruled now mainly by the help of his kinsmen, the Baggára, the herdsmen from beyond the west bank of the Nile. He had caused them to be transported in large numbers from their home in the Western Soudan, had quartered them in and around Khartum, had given them much of the most fertile land in its neighbourhood to cultivate, and in every possible way had endeavoured to bind them to him, and to secure their support to his rule. Even judged by the standard of the Soudan, they were rough and brutal men; but in cunning, in the more degrading forms of vice, and in restless spirit of intrigue, they were surpassed by other more settled tribes who had flocked in past years to the Mahdi's standard.

With the aid of these kinsmen, Abdullah gradually established a reign of terror. Amir after Amir was banished, imprisoned, or beheaded. Spies and informers swarmed, more especially in Omdurman. Men held their lives at the caprice of the Khalifa; and the Khalifa was as capricious as he was cunning. If any one is curious to have before him a picture of the Soudan as it was during the later years of the Khalifa's power, he has but to turn to the pages of Father Ohrwalder, or of Rudolf Slatin. In "Ten Years' Captivity in the Mahdi's Camp," and in "Fire and Sword in the Soudan," will be found such tales of violence, brutality, and human suffering as have rarely been equalled in the annals of man. It passes understanding how for long years, and among such appalling surroundings, Father Ohrwalder and Slatin Pasha, still more how the Sisters of

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Father Ohrwalder's mission, could have maintained existence. They were doubtless inspired by hopes of escape ; and use, we know, dulls pain. But their lives and their persons depended wholly on the Khalifa's will ; and there was no saying when he might turn it to their destruction. An appalling famine for a season desolated the land, bringing with it horrors of general suffering ; but at all times the squalor, the filth, and the obscenity of their surroundings must have made the lives of the captives a hideous nightmare. Death was preferable to existence prolonged among brutes in the guise of men ; brutes devoid of the smallest feeling of humanity towards Europeans ; and at best animated, so far as concerned them, by the toleration which man extends to the inferior animals, or by such as a callous jailer vouchsafes to his prisoners.

With the decay of fanaticism, tribal organization began to reassert itself. The tribes, for a brief moment, had been merged into one people, known to the world as the Dervishes, to the Soudan as the Ansár. Muhammad Ahmad had recognized no distinction of tribe or race, demanding only blind allegiance to his asserted claims. After his death the centrifugal force of the tribal unit revived ; and, as the combined action of the several units gathered strength, the central influence of the Khalifa was weakened.

Meanwhile, under the constant watchfulness of General Sir Francis Grenfell, and since 1892 of his successor General Kitchener, the Egyptian army, increased by the addition of further Soudanese soldiers, animated by past success, and resting as its base on a peaceful and prosperous Egypt, slowly and steadily prepared itself for the resumption of active operations. Excepting in the Eastern Soudan, there had been no serious fighting from 1889 to 1896 ; when suddenly, on March 12th of the latter year, there pealed out



over Egypt, like the ringing of the tocsin, an immediate call to arms. In 1896 the Government of Italy, a friendly Power, found itself temporarily in severe straits, from the pressure, on one side, of the Abyssinians, and from the presence, on the other hand, of the Dervishes before Kassala. In their emergency the Italian Cabinet appealed to London for such assistance as it could furnish, to divert the attention of the Dervishes from Kassala. The reply took the form of an order issued to Cairo to extend the Egyptian frontier to Dongola. The movement of explorers in the south-west and west of the Soudan may very possibly have quickened British counsels; but that the order came as a surprise is unquestionable. Four years before, writing in February, 1892, Sir Evelyn Baring had expressed the opinion that it would be altogether premature to consider the question of reoccupying the Soudan; the military and financial resources of the Egyptian Government were wholly inadequate for the accomplishment of the task. "Much depends," he said, "on the progress of reform in Egypt. In view of the internal complications, which so greatly retard Egyptian progress, I should conjecture that a very considerable period will elapse before the question of reoccupying the Soudan will come within the domain of practical politics. It would, I dare say, be possible to march to Dongola, but there are obvious objections to the reoccupation of that province, unless a further forward movement is contemplated at no very distant date." Sir Evelyn added that it seemed to him probable that the disintegrating process then going on in the Soudan would continue, and that the longer the measure was delayed, the more easily would the object be at length attained.

Much, however, had been accomplished in Egypt since 1892; while the Khalifa's kingdom had become more and



more divided against itself. Father Ohrwalder, Father Rossignoli, and Slatin Pasha (now Sir Rudolf Slatin), who escaped from Omdurman respectively in 1891, 1894, and 1895, brought with them much valuable information. Although the resistance offered by the Baggára would be strenuous, other tribes, which had led the van in the days of the Mahdi, were no longer hostile. The moment when the Khalifa was busily engaged in the neighbourhood of Kassala was singularly auspicious for an advance upon Dongola. So the die was cast.

On the 20th of March an advanced Soudanese brigade occupied Akasha, and on the 1st of May a cavalry skirmish with the enemy took place near this spot. On June the 7th the Dervish garrison of Firket was surprised and almost annihilated; on the 23rd of September, 1896, possession was taken of Dongola. Before the spring of 1897 it was known to the world that the time had come when the rule of the Soudan was to be wrested from the Dervishes. On February 5th of that year the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the intention of the British Government to sweep the Khalifa from his occupation of the Nile valley up to Khartum, and thus to fulfil the responsibilities which it had incurred when it caused the Egyptian Government to abandon the Soudan. Now that the baleful rule of Abdullah was crumbling to decay, the appointed hour, he added, had arrived.

Abu Hamed was taken on the 7th of August, 1897, and on September 6th, 1897, little less than a year after the reoccupation of Dongola, Berber was occupied by the British and Egyptian forces, under the command of General Kitchener. The railway reached Abu Hamed on the 4th of November, 1897, and was pushed forward along the right bank towards Berber. On April 8th, 1898, the battle of Atbara took place, when the Dervishes

were completely defeated, and their leader, the Amir Mahmud, was captured. This success threw the Dervish defence back upon Omdurman. On September 2nd, 1898, General Kitchener's decisive victory before Omdurman, with an Anglo-Egyptian force numbering about 23,000 men, shattered for ever the Khalifa's power, and put an end to a chapter which, even in the history of the Soudan, is unparalleled for horror and human depravity. The bodies of 10,560 Dervishes were counted on the battle-field; but Abdullah for the time escaped with some of his Amirs and Ansár. He was hunted down later, and was finally defeated and slain at Om Debraket, to the west of the Nile, on November 24th, 1899, by Sir Reginald Wingate, commanding a small Egyptian force. With him fell most of the Amirs who had accompanied him; a few were taken prisoners; Osman Digna, as usual, disappeared; but in January of the ensuing year he, too, was captured, not far from Suakin, and joined others of his former comrades in captivity at Damietta.

The battle of Omdurman was so decisive, the annihilation of the Dervish power so complete, the destruction of Abdullah so soon followed the defeat of his army, and was so dramatic in its incidents, that we are apt to forget that not less than two and a half years were occupied between the decision to advance on Dongola and the occupation of the Khalifa's capital. It is a long interval of time, when judged by the standard of modern wars; not less than the duration of the Boer War. *Ohne hast, ohne rast*, had been the maxim guiding the advance. No precaution had been neglected, nothing had been overlooked, as little as might be had been left to the risks of warfare. There had been no "unfortunate incidents." The London War Office could neither claim credit nor suffer discredit from the result. The operations had been entirely in the hands

of the Anglo-Egyptian authorities, unhampered by heads or sections of Departments and unfettered by control from Pall Mall.

Of the *dramatis personæ* who crowded the Soudan stage in 1884, almost all had disappeared. General Gordon gave his life, a sacrifice for his friends. The arch impostor, Muhammad Ahmad, died of a loathsome disease. Abdullah, Wad el Najûmi, Wad el Helu, Ahmed Fedil, with other Amirs, fell at one time or another in battle. Many Amirs had been carried captive into Egypt. Colonel Stewart and Mr. Power were murdered at Berber; Lupton, lately governor of the Equatorial Province, had died at Omdurman. Slatin Pasha happily escaped, and is back again among old scenes, in high employ under the Soudanese Government. After all the wrack and storm of that troubled time has subsided we get a glimpse of yet another who, in General Gordon's opinion, was the most capable of them all, Zebehr, the former slave-dealer. Since we last saw him, he had been deported to Gibraltar during the advance upon Khartum. Returning thence after two years, he remained in Cairo until the death of the Khalifa, after which he was allowed to return to the Soudan. "He is now," we read,<sup>1</sup> "very old. He lives on his paternal estates at Geila, near Khartum, and is a great agriculturist. He has laid aside all his old objectionable habits, and is now a tall old man, rather good-looking. . . . He is now quite harmless, and his sympathy with us, and antipathy to the Mahdi, joined to a unique knowledge of a very remote province, has made his friendship valuable. Sir Reginald Wingate likes him. . . . He is now a weak old man, respected by some, feared even yet by others. . . . As a great agriculturist

<sup>1</sup> "Our Sudan: Its Pyramids and Progress," by John Ward, F.S.A., p. 356. (J. Murray, 1905.)

his property at Geila is an object-lesson of much value in the efforts we are making to teach the importance of improving the tillage and variety of the best paying crops." As we leave behind us the darkness of those evil years, we take away, as a last impression, this pleasing pastoral picture of Zebehr, retired perforce from the busy cares of man-hunting, and spending the evening of his days in the fruitful sunshine of official favour ; his sword turned into a pruning hook, and his later years employed as *Candide* would have had him employ them. We are reminded of that other gentle recluse at Edmonton ; " My name is Retired Leisure ; I am to be met in trim gardens ; I grow into gentility perceptibly " ;

Stet, quicunque volet, potens  
Aulæ culmine lubrico ;  
Me dulcis saturet quies.  
Obscuro positus loco,  
Leni perfruar otio.

With the destruction of the Khalifa's power, there was definitely solved one of the two great problems which had confronted Sir Evelyn Baring on his return to Egypt in September, 1883, just fifteen years before. The Soudan question was at last settled ; St. George had slain the dragon. But there remained internationalism. France still clung to her entrenched positions in Egypt ; the Convention of 1885 yet held good. The Caisse, though of late years more accommodating in temper, had shown itself far from helpful when there was a question of a British advance to Dongola. In March, 1896, the Egyptian Government had applied to the Caisse for an advance from the general reserve fund of £E.500,000, to meet the expenses of the expedition. By Article 3 of the Khedivial Decree of July 12th, 1888, which, with the consent of the Powers, created the general reserve fund, it had been provided



that the resources of that fund might be devoted, among other matters, to "extraordinary expenditure incurred with the previous assent of the Commission of the Debt." Four Commissioners, the British, Austrian, German, and Italian, held that the expenditure of money on military needs connected with the advance to Dongola came within the limits of this provision, and the advance asked for was made. The French and Russian members objected, and cited the Government before the Mixed Tribunals. The Government was condemned; and on December 2nd, 1896, the decision was upheld by the Mixed Court of Appeal. The British Government solved the difficulty by advancing the sum in dispute to the Egyptian Government. Ultimately the Cabinet wiped out its entire claim to all sums advanced on this account, amounting, as definitely entered in the accounts, to £798,802, thus turning the position of the French and Russian members of the Caisse, and giving evidence of its intention to share with the Government of the Khedive in the cost, possibly in the gains, of the venture in which they had together embarked. It was the last occasion on which the Caisse, now almost within sight of its own final disendowment, attempted to reassert its international authority, in opposition to the desires and aims of the Egyptian Government and its advisers. It was supported, as it had been in 1885, by the Mixed Tribunals. But it gained a barren victory; for the British Treasury does not part with public funds without prospect of compensation. It furnished, moreover, to its adversaries an exemplary proof of the intolerable character of its pretensions, when it claimed not only the duty of protecting the public creditor against the State, albeit that the public creditor was raised far above the reach of danger, but sought to obstruct the Egyptian Government in its efforts to regain territories

to which it had every right, and to rid humanity, in so doing, of a monster. The veto which it attempted to exercise in a matter lying beyond its own cognizance or competence was the more inadmissible because its coffers were bursting with Egyptian Government revenues for which it could, of itself, find no adequate employment.

The final blow was not dealt to internationalism till 1904, a little more than five years after the fall of Omdurman, and therefore much ahead of the period which this narrative has reached. It was the result of political combinations covering a far wider area than the lands watered by the Nile; and it was the work of diplomatists in London and in Paris, with whom this story is not concerned. The part assigned to the British Agent in Cairo was to demonstrate the inequity and the iniquity of the existing state of affairs so far as it concerned Egypt. His contribution to the settlement of the question was to have ensured the uniform and progressive advance of the country during the years that had elapsed since 1883. Without that evidence the assault on internationalism might have proved impossible; supported by it, the attack was irresistible.

We shall be guilty of anticipating the course of events in briefly enumerating the main points which made for the liberation of Egypt. It will be necessary, later, to return to them; but they may perhaps be summarized here. The ordinary revenue had risen by steady and constant advance from £E.9,637,173 in 1885—the year of the International Convention—to £E.12,248,108 in 1903, in spite of remissions of taxation amounting by that time to more than £E.1,600,000, and independently of reduction in the salt duty and in postal, railway, and telegraph rates. The land revenue, in spite of remissions of more than half a

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million, had increased, owing to improved irrigation and to extended cultivation, from £E.4,971,970 to £E.5,569,000. Customs had risen from £E.710,910 to £E.1,447,261; tobacco, as a separate head, had increased from £E.212,267 to £E.1,304,077; the value of imports from £E.8,989,042 to £E.16,753,190; the value of exports from £E.11,424,970 to £E.19,116,192. The incidence of taxation per head cannot be stated comparatively, for reasons which will be found at page 278, but it amounted in 1903 only to sixteen shillings. The market price of the Unified Debt had risen from £63½ on the 1st of January, 1885, to £103½ on the 1st of January, 1903; the Privileged Debt, then a 5 per cent stock, from 87½ to a 3½ per cent stock at 99½. The administration in all its branches had been subjected to careful scrutiny. So much of it as still resisted the hand of the reformer relied either on the support of European Powers and on the text of charters granted in former times, in conditions which had now become inapplicable, or on the immunity from interference in certain directions which was conceded by the British authorities to Islam. The army had shown itself capable, not only of defending Egypt, but of taking a prominent part in the recovery of the Soudan. Capital was pouring into the country; fresh enterprise was attracting skilled labour from all quarters of the globe.

But while the revenues were increasing, and the needs of the country were expanding with its revenues, its surplus funds were annually being swept off into the treasury of the Public Debt. There they were doomed to lie idle, unless and until the Commissioners were pleased to assent to their employment for public purposes, of which neither by local knowledge, nor experience, nor by the fitness of things, nor by the terms of the decree under which they had been called into existence, could they be regarded as



competent, or as duly constituted judges. The general reserve fund, in the hands of the Caisse, closed in 1903 with an unappropriated balance of £E.966,781; the economies fund at the same date had to its credit no less than £E.5,507,055. It was no exaggeration, in the Agent's opinion, to say that internationalism had up to that time imposed an annual extra charge of about £E.1,750,000 on the Egyptian Government.

When the time came, considerations such as these must have greatly contributed towards shaping the settlement happily arrived at. There were doubtless other grave and important elements which contributed to the compact between Great Britain and France in 1904; but it is abundantly clear that but for the prosperity of Egypt in British hands, the claim to rescue that country from internationalism could not have been put in the foreground, nor would it have been favourably entertained. If Mahdism was slain by the sword, internationalism succumbed to surplus.

The time, however, was not yet. Though from 1896 onwards the revival of Egypt carried all opposition before it, and the tenacity with which positions created in past years had been maintained showed signs of growing weakness, we have yet to give account of matters which were momentarily put aside in order that we might venture on an anticipation of the end. We left the affairs of Egypt at the close of 1896. We may now resume our narrative with some account of Egyptian progress during the years 1897 and 1898, in the latter of which years the Soudan was restored to Egypt. We may then pass on to the period intervening between 1899 and 1904, inclusively, with such notice of the progress and present status of the several public administrations in Egypt as is possible in a book of this nature. The final settlement of the Franco-British



differences which was that year effected may be next explained ; and we may conclude with a brief account of the measures taken towards the development of the Soudan, since, towards the close of 1898, it fell into Anglo-Egyptian hands.

## CHAPTER XXI

### ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Marked progress after 1896—Use of private enterprise—Electric tramways—Light railways—Cholera and sanitation—Growth of revenue—Fishery reforms—Census of 1896—Its results—Filling up of the Khalij—Creation of National and Agricultural Banks—Indebtedness of fellaheen—Liquidation of Daira Sanieh estates by a company—Sale of Khedivial steamships to a company—Cost of reconquest of Soudan—Retirement of Sir Elwin Palmer—Appointment of Mr. Gorst—Salt monopoly made over to a company—River tolls abolished—Further reforms in fishery system—Extension of telephonic system—Return of cholera—Octroi abolished in Cairo and Alexandria—Unexpected rise in market prices—Probable expenditure on irrigation from 1884 to 1908.

BEFORE turning aside to follow the progress and issue of the final struggle with the Khalifa, we had brought our sketch of internal events down to the close of 1895, or the commencement of 1896. From 1883 to 1889 there have been traced the earlier struggles against bankruptcy, and the repulse of internationalism. From 1890 to the close of 1895, the revival of Egypt, under the fiscal policy adopted by Lord Cromer, has been illustrated and explained, with its preference for remission of taxation over schemes of rapid administrative progress. From 1896 onwards we enter on the third period; a period of marked expansion, whether through the aid of private enterprise, or from the growth of public revenue. This period, again, divides itself into two parts; the former dating from the latter half of 1896 to the closing months of 1898, during which time the revival of Egypt was somewhat hindered by war; the latter, counting

from the close of 1898 to the present hour, when, in the absence of all obstacles, and under the influence of a variety of favourable conditions, the prosperity of the country has been unprecedented.

When the development of the country began to absorb attention, it must have been evident that, while the Government resources were limited, both in themselves and by reason of the financial fetters imposed by internationalism, there were many enterprises which might, with advantage and without objection, be entrusted to the agency of public companies. Although there were no municipal bodies, nor prospect of profiting by local resources in order to supplement State action, many of the objects desired fell rather into the domain of local endeavour or private enterprise than of public expenditure. The choice thus lay between using private capital and the indefinite deferment of projects which, with the growing needs of the community, became annually more urgent. While some of these might be postponed, in the case of others of greater importance use was made of the resources and energy of private enterprise. Various schemes were entrusted to companies, under conditions more or less stringent. Concessions, when possible, were so framed as to secure to the Government the reversion after a term of the privilege conferred. The grant of monopolies was jealously avoided; participation in profits, where possible, was secured. A dual agency has therefore been at work in various directions since 1896, to the great advantage of the public; while the Government has been enabled to devote the limited funds at its disposal to objects falling more appropriately within the sphere of State action. It is necessary to refer briefly to a few of these schemes, for they show the objects which were aimed at by the Agent in the public interest, while many of them illustrate his methods of combining

fiscal relief with the furthering of the development of local resources.

A contract was signed shortly before 1896 for a system of electric tramways in Cairo. The constant flitting to and fro of tramcars, with their brilliancy of innumerable electric sparklets in the clear Egyptian nights, contrasts strangely with memories still recent of those long shadowy files of noiseless camels on the sandy Ezbekieh, which have passed on their way, and are now as much lost to us in the mists of time as is the caravan that brought Joseph to Egypt. Electricity was about the same time introduced for lighting into the principal hotels and many private houses. Its use for that purpose, and in public buildings, is now general, and Cairo is as well lit as many prominent cities in Europe. It was from about the same time that Cairo began that expansion to which as yet there seems no limit. New thoroughfares, new houses, new gardens everywhere meet the eye; native wealth, which till lately shrank from the ruler's glance, has now no hesitation in letting itself be seen, and joins in the competition for lands and houses. Cairo of the Muski, and of mediævalism, is disappearing; and villadom, begirt with bougainvilleas, and bright with the lustre of Oriental bloom, is stretching out along the Nile an ever-advancing arm.

Arrangements were about the same time made with private enterprise for a light narrow-gauge railway, sixty-five miles long, from Mansourah, in the Delta, to Matariah, the centre of the Lake Menzaleh fishing enterprise. In 1896 the construction of a network of similar railways, to run in greater part along the district roads which had been made of late years in the Delta, was agreed upon with two companies, which have since amalgamated—the one, a British company known as the Delta Light Railway Company (the title by which the united companies



are now known), the other, a local society, known as the Est Light Railway Company. These light railways have revolutionized the means of transport in the Delta, but a concession granted to a Coptic syndicate in the Fayum has been less successful; neither the capital nor the experience needful having been forthcoming. Five hundred and fifty-six miles of light railway have been opened in the Delta; more are under consideration. In 1904-5 they carried 4,694,744 passengers, and lifted 623,345 tons of goods. Among the most common articles carried by them are the debris of ancient villages dating from remote antiquity, which, owing to the lime contained in their materials, are now valuable as manure for purposes of cultivation. So the home of the dead fellah is the support of his present successor.

Pestilence again, in 1896, as in 1883, accompanied war. Cholera broke out on October 11th, 1895, at Damietta, imported probably from Mecca. By February 1st, 1896, the disease was completely stamped out in the provinces, but in December it appeared in Alexandria, whence it was reimported into villages, and continued till the end of October, 1896. Some 36,000 cases are believed to have occurred. "There is but one satisfactory way to safeguard a country against cholera," wrote the chief sanitary officer, "and that is to put it in such a sanitary condition that, even if introduced, the disease will not find a favourable soil for its development. In this respect practically everything remains to be done in Egypt." This was written in 1896; six years later, in 1902, another epidemic of cholera swept over Egypt. Within the narrow limits of available funds, and so far as in the conditions presenting themselves may be practicable, the sanitary condition of Egypt improves; but any one who is in the least conversant with the climate, customs, and conditions of life

throughout the East will readily appreciate the difficulties to be encountered. Not the least among them is the bill. To save life on any considerable scale is little less costly than to destroy it; drainage schemes, like battleships, are for those who can afford them. Moreover, sanitation is the Cinderella of departments, and is regarded in most countries as the peculiar care of municipal or local funds, which in Egypt scarcely exist. When State funds are distributed, one of the last claims usually considered is that of the public, by which all funds are furnished, for the improvement of the sanitary conditions in which it lives. The health of towns and villages is regarded as the business of those who live in them. If they cannot furnish sufficient funds, their health must wait till, with larger means, they can afford to better their condition.

Though the years 1896, 1897, and 1898 were years of war, the development of Egypt suffered less than might have been expected from the Soudan campaign. The ordinary revenue, that is, the revenue raised from customary sources, as apart from grants from the general and special reserve funds, or from the proceeds of loans for special purposes, was £E.11,092,564 in 1897, and the ordinary expenditure £E.9,709,144; in 1898 the ordinary revenue rose to £E.11,131,980, the ordinary expenditure being £E.9,800,033. The ordinary expenditure, being limited by the Convention of March, 1885, was an almost constant figure. In the year 1897 the ordinary revenue had for the first time exceeded £E.11,000,000, while the ordinary expenditure, since 1886, had remained below £E.10,000,000. Both in 1897 and 1898 large sums were obtained from the General Reserve Fund by the Irrigation Department. The Special Reserve Fund, swelled in 1897 by a contribution of £E.778,832 from the British Government, contributed to the cost of the Soudan Expedition. In the close of

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1898 there was a total balance to the credit of the General Reserve Fund of £E.3,617,132, of which £E.2,615,862 was earmarked for advances guaranteed by the fund, and £E.1,001,270 was unappropriated; while the Special Reserve Fund showed a closing balance of £E.478,233.

The chief internal incidents of the years 1897 and 1898 were reform in the system of fisheries, and the decision to construct the weirs mentioned at page 226, in order to lighten the strain on the barrage; of which the piers were also strengthened, while rapid progress was made in the construction of the Assouan reservoir. The statistics also of the census which had been carried out in the spring of 1896 were published.

As to the fisheries, a scheme was introduced involving some remission of taxation, but ensuring a more simple system of dealing with the Lake Menzaleh fishermen, whose interests were further promoted by the construction of the light railway, already referred to. Lake Menzaleh is the great sheet of shallow brackish water which extends from Port Said to Damietta, covering an area of 600,000 acres. Communication exists between this lake and the Mediterranean through a narrow gap in the coast-line. The lake abounds in fish, principally in varieties of mullet. The fishing population, as in many other parts of the world, lives quite apart, and is very backward. Hitherto all fish had been brought direct to Government agencies, where they were sold by auction, the system involving a large establishment, much accounting, and vexatious interference with the fishermen. Under the reformed system the establishment was reduced from a cost of £E.10,000 to £E.1400 per annum, and a system was introduced of licensing fishing boats, the sale of fish being left in the fishermen's hands. The revenue fell for a time from £E.76,000 to £E.62,000 per annum, but in 1903 it had already risen above its original figure.



The barrage and the Assouan works are dealt with elsewhere in the course of this narrative, which may pass on to the census, the statistics of which showed a total population, exclusive of Suakin and the Dongola province, of 9,734,405, in the proportion of 50·8 per cent male and 49·2 female. This population consisted of 8,978,775 Muslims, 730,162 Christians, and 25,200 Jews. Of the Christians, 608,446 were Copts; the remainder included Orthodox Church and Roman Catholics in almost equal numbers, and 11,894 Protestants. Of the total population of 9,734,405, no less than 9,266,519 were returned as illiterate. Deducting children of tender age and Bedouins, the percentage of illiterate was 88, and even in the towns fell only as low as 71. Of the total population, 9,621,879 were Egyptian, 112,526 being foreigners. Of the Egyptians, again, 9,007,755 were settled Egyptian Ottoman subjects; 40,150 were non-Egyptian Ottoman subjects; 573,954 were Bedouins, of whom 485,283 were settled and 88,671 unsettled. Of a total male population of 4,947,850, no fewer than 1,771,116 were classed as having no profession. The proportion of agriculturists was about two-thirds of the total male population. Cairo numbered 570,062 souls, Alexandria 319,766; excepting Tanta (57,289), no other town exceeded 50,000.

The relative numbers of the Europeans classed under their several countries were found to be :—

Greece	.	.	.	.	38,175
Italy	.	.	.	.	24,467
Great Britain	.	.	.	.	19,557
France	.	.	.	.	14,155
Austria	.	.	.	.	7,117
Russia	.	.	.	.	3,193
Germany	.	.	.	.	1,277
Other countries	.	.	.	.	4,585
					<u>112,526</u>



The population returned under the head "Great Britain" included 4909 of the army of occupation with their wives and children, 6463 Maltese, and 614 British Indians, or 11,986 out of a total of 19,557. The Russian total was increased by the accidental presence of a transport in Egyptian waters containing 1793 Russian soldiers and sailors. Of the remainder, 430 were Bokhariots, and such like.

Comparison with the figures of the census of 1882 is illusory, for 1882 was a year of military revolt, when all Egypt was for many months in a ferment, and it was impossible to carry out or to control effectively any such delicate operation as a census; when much of the European element, moreover, had already begun that exodus which before the close of July had denuded Egypt of almost the whole of that section of its population.

In 1897 there was made an end of a relic of old days, which had played its part beyond memory of man, but was now doomed as a nuisance. An ancient canal, known by the name of the Khalīj, formerly passed through the native town of Cairo. When the annual Nile flood rose high enough to be admitted into its channel, the ensuing harvest was looked upon as assured; and the dam that temporarily restrained the Nile water from flowing into the Khalīj was cut, with great formality and rejoicings, in the presence of the Khedive and of his Ministers. Tradition had it that in pre-Muhammadan times a virgin had annually been thrown to the Nile on this occasion; and a dressed dummy still represented the victim at each cutting of the dam. For many years before 1897 the ceremony had become a mere form, the improvements of the irrigation officers having made this canal useless. Like some other public institutions nearer home, the Khalīj, which had been once identified with effective force, had

grown, with lapse of time and change of circumstance, into a nuisance. The sanitary authorities pressed to have it filled up ; and filled up it was. There was some hesitation arising from doubt as to the effect of the measure upon the conservative Oriental, who looked on, however, as on such occasions he often does, in supreme indifference, reserving his outburst for some other occasion, when probably it would be wholly unexpected. An electric tramway runs over the site of the Khaliġ ; and before long, except by the curious, the spot where thousands annually did homage to the Nile will be forgotten, no less than the gratitude due to the canal officers whose skill superseded it, and to the sanitary advisers who abolished it.

In 1898 the country was ripe for a State Bank, similar to those existing in other countries. Before very many years the Caisse de la Dette Publique would disappear, and an institution of the nature of a State Bank would be necessary to carry on the treasury business of the Government, and the work at present done by the Caisse in regard to the Public Debt. Accordingly, by Khedivial Decree dated June 25th, 1898, the National Bank of Egypt was created, with an initial capital of £1,000,000. It now acts as the Treasury of the Government ; the Government balances, with the exception of those still at the Caisse de la Dette, being deposited with the Bank. It has the privilege of issuing notes payable on demand, which, though not legal tender, are received in payment of Government dues. The value of the notes in circulation on December 31, 1904, amounted to £E.538,000. The capital of the Bank, with the approval of Government and of the shareholders, can be increased when necessary, and now stands at £3,000,000. When the Bank was created it arranged to continue a system of advances to land-

owners which the Government had experimentally instituted, and carried on this work until its loans amounted to £600,000. Finding that larger capital was necessary, and urged by the Government further to assist the indebted fellaheen, the National Bank, in agreement with the Government, formed at a later date the Agricultural Bank of Egypt, with an authorized capital of £2,500,000, and in 1902 handed over to that Bank all its loans to landowners. The Government gives a 3 per cent guarantee on the capital put out in loans, and recovers interest and sinking fund by means of its own revenue collectors. The rate of interest was fixed at 9 per cent; when as much as £7,000,000 is loaned, the rate will be reduced to 8 per cent. The loans outstanding on January 31st, 1905, amounted to £4,346,500, arrears in liquidation of capital or payment of interest being insignificant. Since then the loans have again largely increased. The Bank's present authorized capital is £10,310,000.

When the Government originally embarked on the project of making these small loans, it was with a view to relieve the small proprietors from the exactions of usurers, who charged from 25 per cent to 200 per cent for accommodation. The effort has been successful, for the Agricultural Bank has driven most of these usurers out of the provinces. The old loans made by them have been, as far as was possible, paid off by the Agricultural Bank. It may be added that all the Bank's agents in the provinces are selected Englishmen, and the majority of the Board are administrators of the National Bank of Egypt.

The distinctive feature of the Egyptian system is that, although the whole of the management is in the hands of the Bank, the Government revenue officials collect the sums due on account of interest and Sinking Fund. Though

the design is to assist the fellaheen, the basis of the experiment is strictly commercial. The following was the number of loans outstanding on December 31st, 1904 :—

From £E.½ to £E.1	.	.	.	1,060
„ 1 „ 5	.	.	.	6,776
„ 5 „ 20	.	.	.	9,662
„ 20 „ 50	.	.	.	96,234
„ 50 „ 100	.	.	.	13,207
„ 100 „ 150	.	.	.	3,934
„ 150 „ 500	.	.	.	3,334
				<u>134,207</u>

The great majority of loans are made, it will be seen, in sums ranging from £E.20 to £E.50.

The indebtedness of the fellaheen was prominently noticed in Lord Dufferin's Report, and has formed in each subsequent year the subject of examination, inquiry, and experiment. Both the Crédit Foncier and the National Bank of Egypt had been induced to interest themselves in the matter ; but the minimum amount of the loans which they could offer, low as it was, was yet so high as to leave the great mass of needy fellaheen unassisted. With the establishment of an Agricultural Bank, and the return of extraordinary prosperity to Egypt, the opportunity of the indebted fellah has come to him, if he will avail himself of it. But the fellah, though laborious, is not thrifty ; and he yields from time to time to inducements to extravagance which proves his ruin. He is now, at any rate, beginning to find that he is under a regime which will not rob him of his savings. He need not therefore fear to let it be seen that he has accumulated money, and it is very possible that this assurance will, in course of time, encourage in him a spirit of economy. He was apt in past times to spend what



spare cash he had on matters which exposed him to no risk from the evil eye of fiscal officers. His expenditure was limited to objects, the enjoyment of which, such as it was, seemed assured to him ; to marriages, for example, and to the festivities accompanying them. Of late it has been observed that money, which in old days would have been devoted to personal indulgence, has been sunk in the acquisition of fresh land. This is the beginning of thrift. But when the indebtedness of the fellaheen is spoken of, it is necessary further to distinguish. The fellah who is not himself proprietor of any part of the land which he cultivates, but is a mere labourer without right of occupancy—for there would seem to be no tenant-right in Egypt—can have little to give by way of security, and little to lose if he is sold up. The term, as currently used, is confined apparently to fellaheen possessing some measure of property in land ; but there must be very many of the fellaheen who have neither land nor statutory rights of possession in land, and their condition calls for separate investigation.

Another measure adopted at the same time has contributed to the welfare of the fellaheen in little less degree than the Agricultural Bank. In 1898, the Egyptian Government sold to a company the whole of the Daira Sanieh properties for the sum of £6,431,500, that being the amount outstanding on the 31st December, 1897, of the Daira Sanieh Loan, which was guaranteed by the said properties. The lands known as the Daira Sanieh, it will be remembered, had been assigned to his creditors by Ismail Pasha in 1876, at the time of the Goschen-Joubert settlement. The object of the Government in selling these properties *en bloc* to a company was to pay off the Daira Loan, and so to convey the lands back to the people themselves at fair prices. It was provided that the purchase money should

be increased by the amount of any deficit, and reduced by the amount of any surplus which the Daira Sanieh Administration might show, up to the date on which the purchase should have been completed; and that funds arising from the sale of any of the properties up to that same date should be applied to the redemption of the bonds, and should thus further reduce the sum to be paid. The properties were to be delivered to the company on the 15th October, 1905. The purchasers undertook, seven years from the date of the above sale to them, to dispose of all the lands, comprised in the Daira Sanieh estate, provided that they could obtain a price leaving in the aggregate a net profit of at least 20 per cent over and above the price to be paid by the purchasers. It was thought that a company would effect the sales more promptly than a quasi-Government Administration, such as was that of the Daira Sanieh. This anticipation has proved correct, the whole of the property having been sold by the Daira Sanieh Company even before the 15th October, 1905; while of the Domains property, which is still held by a quasi-State Administration, little, in comparison, has been disposed of. Shortly after the company was formed, in 1898, it proceeded to prepare a price list of all properties. These were subsequently offered for sale in lots, which were within the purchase power of the cultivating classes, subject to delivery on the 15th October, 1905, or as soon after that date as possible. Before that date, under the terms of the original loan, actual possession could not be given.

Fortunately for the company, the price of land has in the last few years gone up enormously, and the transaction has turned out a much better investment than could have been expected in 1898. The amount realized by the sale of the properties has very largely exceeded the amount of

the Daira Sanieh Loan, thus leaving a large profit on the whole transaction. This profit, which is equally divided between the Government and the company, amounts to about seven millions sterling. The Government will thus receive about three and a half millions sterling; will have liquidated the debt for which the property was security; and will have attained its principal object, in giving back to the sons of the soil the lands of which Ismail Pasha had obtained possession.

In the same year, 1897, the Khedivial fleet of steamers, which had been employed under Ismail Pasha to carry the Egyptian mails weekly to Constantinople, Syria, Piræus, and Red Sea ports, was transferred, together with the Government arsenal buildings, Suez graving dock, and other property, for a sum of £E.150,000 to a British company, now known as the Khedivial Mail Steamship Company. The Government did not dispose of sufficient capital either to purchase new steamers, or to keep in repair those already in its possession; nor was it an undertaking in which State agency could conveniently be employed. Since the sale of its fleet to a private company the Government has laid down a code of regulations for the safety and comfort of Egyptian pilgrims, who are annually conveyed in great numbers by the Khedivial steamers to Jedda on the Red Sea. The company, under its contract with the Government, has constructed a graving dock within the harbour of Alexandria 533 ft. long, 64 ft. wide at entrance, with 23 ft. of water over the sill. After construction this dock was purchased by the Government, whose property it remains.

Here is the summary of the cost of bringing the Soudan back to its allegiance to Egypt, from the spring of 1896, when it was decided to move forward from Wadi Halfa to Dongola, up to the commencement of 1899, when Omdur-



man had been captured, and the Khalifa's rule had been shattered.

	Railways. £E.	Telegraphs. £E.	Gunboats. £E.	Military Expenditure. £E.	Total. £E.
Dongola campaign	181,851	8,299	65,869	469,622	725,641
Subsequent military operations.	699,521	13,526	89,065	526,601	1,328,713
Khartum railway extension.	300,000	—	—	—	300,000
Total	<u>1,181,372</u>	<u>21,825</u>	<u>154,934</u>	<u>996,223</u>	<u>2,354,354</u>

It will be remembered that the cost of the expedition to Dongola, which is shown above at the figure of £E.725,641, was contributed by the British Government, when the Caisse de la Dette refused to make an advance from the general reserve to meet it. The British contribution thus sufficed to meet nearly one-third of the total expenditure involved in the Dongola campaign, and in subsequent military operations. The reconquest of the Soudan may be said to have cost Egypt, in round figures, about £1,630,000, against which may be set off the capital cost of construction of a considerable length of railway and telegraph.

In 1898 the late Sir Elwin Palmer resigned his post of Financial Adviser, to become the first Governor of the National Bank of Egypt. Though spared the pressing anxieties of his predecessor, he had met with his own full share of difficulties; and it was only towards the close of his tenure of office that the purse-strings of the Government could be in a sensible degree loosened. Sir Elwin was mainly instrumental in the difficult and delicate financial negotiations which were brought successfully to a close by the conversion of the Privileged,



Daira, and Domains Loans; and Lord Cromer bore grateful testimony to his services in connexion with the arrangements which culminated in the contract for the construction of the Assouan reservoir. As Governor of the National Bank since 1898, as President subsequently of the Agricultural Bank, and in many similar capacities, he forwarded various industrial enterprises by his large experience, by financial skill, and by his knowledge of men and matters in Egypt. He was succeeded by Mr. (now Sir Eldon) Gorst, of the diplomatic service, but at that time Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior. In 1898 Sir John Scott also retired, making over his duties to the present Judicial Adviser, Mr. (later Sir Malcolm) McIlwraith.

With the commencement of 1899, the full flowing river of revival came down in flood upon Egypt. Many obstructions had been either swept away or submerged; the Khalifa was a fugitive; the finances were most prosperous; distribution of the Nile water in experienced hands had greatly added to its productiveness; the Assouan reservoir was about to increase the available volume; the Soudan had come under Anglo-Egyptian rule; the reserve funds in the hands of the Caisse were overflowing; enterprise was bringing fresh capital and skill into the country. If the turn of the fellah had come in 1890, it was now the day of the departments. Turning over the pages of Lord Cromer's annual reports from 1899 onwards, one is bewildered at the variety and number of subjects to which the attention of the Government was about to be directed. Post Office savings banks, paper currency, water-supply of towns and villages, geological survey, meteorology, village sanitation, cattle disease, normal schools, schools of agriculture, of engineering, and of medicine, veterinary schools, agricultural and horticultural societies, Nile fish surveys, Antiquities Department—these are some only of the

growths which, at one or other time since 1899, have sprung up, side by side with more venerable occupants of the soil. Where in 1883 there was neither blade nor root, and where the exhausted powers of Egypt could not even maintain the older industries, all kinds of exotics have been since introduced and flourish. It would be far beyond the scope of this book to deal adequately with so wide a range of subjects; but their existence and growth are ample proof of the vitality which again animates the country. The wonder is that with such an exiguous staff of trained officials, and with reserve funds until 1904 in the control of the Caisse, the Administration has been enabled to tend and foster so great a multiplicity of interests. It would be interesting, if space permitted, to sketch the progress of many of them; but when some brief notice of miscellaneous reforms has been added, and when weightier matters, such as law and justice, education, jails, sanitation, and land survey, have been dealt with, space will have been exhausted. Too little room, indeed, will then remain for a sketch of the measures taken to bring into the family of recognized peoples that dark and abject Soudan which has hitherto for the most part lain beyond the pale of humanity; and has been left, in the obscurity of its remoteness, a prey to the man-hunter and to the raider, or consigned to the tender mercies of officials, whose bowels of compassion were not to be moved, and whose hunger for lucre was unappeasable.

The supply of salt was made over, as a monopoly, but under careful restrictions and conditions, to a company in 1899. The revenue derived from salt amounted, in 1904, to £E.182,000, as against £E.159,978 in 1901, £E.167,216 in 1902, and £E.169,686 in 1903. The average rate of consumption is about 5·4 kilogrammes per head of population, but smuggled salt is largely consumed. Salt is sold by

the company at £E.5 per ton, the Government receiving out of this sum a royalty of £E.3½ per ton. A large reduction in the royalty is among the financial measures contemplated when the general revenues permit of it. The desert is full of salt, to be had for the trouble of taking. Hence much smuggling, mostly by the very poor, and the adoption of repressive and punitive measures, which are wholly opposed to the spirit and policy of the present Administration in Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

From 1901 the heavy tolls which from old time had been imposed on boats passing under the bridges and through the locks of the Nile were abolished. The enforcement of these tolls was characteristic of native Egyptian fiscal methods. Those who used and passed over the Nile bridges paid no tolls. Those who passed under them on the highway of the river in boats, and suffered obstruction, were heavily taxed; for it was easier to raise comparatively large sums from a relatively small number of boats than very small sums from a great many foot-passengers. The Nile river dues were also believed to protect the railways from undue competition. As soon as the finances admitted of it, these tolls were removed. The estimated direct loss of annual revenue was £E.46,000; but the navigation of the Nile was henceforth free. In 1898, 15,867 boats had passed through the locks at the Delta barrage; in 1904 it was found that the number had increased to 41,740.

A little later, in 1902, the farming system which had hitherto existed on the Nile, and in fisheries on all other lakes except Menzaleh (of which the story has been already told), was abolished, and any fisherman who takes out a licence for his boat is now at liberty to fish. The immediate loss of revenue was £E.11,000, but so large are the

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II for the extinction of the State salt monopoly.



profits to the fishermen that the number of licences taken out rapidly rises, and with it the Government receipts, of which the normal amount may be placed at £E.76,000.

Telephones were introduced into Egypt as far back as 1881, but since 1899 their use, both in Government and private offices and in hotels, has greatly increased, and has become more general than in London. Cairo and Alexandria, which are now connected by telephone, are also supplied severally with systems of underground cables. In most of the Delta provinces the headquarters of the province are connected by telephone with their several district units, and these again with the more important villages within their limits. In this respect Egypt is far ahead of India, where the use of the telephone by the provincial public is almost unknown. The administrative use of telephones in the interior of India would ensure, as in Egypt, a large saving in village watchmen, clerks, and stationery, and would prove a material aid in the detection of crime. The Egyptian Telephone Company, which has exchanges at Cairo and Alexandria, has been the agent employed for construction and maintenance of poles and wires, the lines being, after construction, rented to the Government for a term of years.

In the autumn of 1902, seven years since the last visitation, cholera reappeared in Egypt, causing the death of some 35,000 persons. It is believed to have been imported from the Hejáz. This was the third visitation since the British occupation, or in a space of nineteen years. Behind the financier, however liberal he prove himself, rides the black care of this ever-recurring epidemic. Sooner or later Cairo and Alexandria may be drained; but the provincial towns and villages will still baffle the sanitary reformer, who meets with no aid from the apathetic public, and



moves ever in fear of being accused of violating religious uses, or disregarding social needs and customs.

In 1903 octroi duties, which had been previously abolished in other smaller towns, were finally put an end to in Cairo and Alexandria. The loss of revenue to the State was about £200,000 per annum. The immediate, but unforeseen, effect of the measure was to raise the price of the perishable commodities on which the duty had been levied. Produce of this nature, when once brought into a town, having paid duty, had perforce to be disposed of; for if withdrawn for sale elsewhere, it would have had again to pay octroi. But with the abolition of the duty, if the seller did not get the price he asked, he was able to withhold sale. Other minor reasons may have operated; in the long run any rise in price would presumably attract other holders, and prices would find their natural level.

For the rest, battles with locusts, battles with the cotton worm, battles against the smugglers of hashish, battles against public gambling, and all the lesser efforts which claim the attention of well-organized Administrations, have at one or other season in late years occupied the thoughts and energies of Egyptian officials. Interesting as they may be in themselves, and important as they are in the domestic annals of Egypt, they can find no more than mere mention here. So too with the introduction of improvements which mark the presence of a civilized Government, such as the formation of a statistical bureau, the furthering of a geological survey, the fitting up of an observatory, the preservation of Egyptian and of Arab monuments, the safe housing (at last) of the Egyptological Museum, down to the introduction of Post Office savings banks, and the extension of the cash-on-delivery system to parcels passing between Great Britain and Egypt, where it has been in vogue for internal traffic for the past nineteen

years. To induce pious Moslems, by the way, to receive interest on their deposits in savings banks, the Grand Mufti and other high authorities on the law of Islam had to be called in, and by their aid a law was so framed as to combat uneasy scruples. But we must turn to weightier matters—to irrigation, to the Egyptian Tribunals, to education, to jails, to sanitation—before we finally revert to the Anglo-French settlement of 1904, and the financial position as then definitely secured.

Much had been done—all, in truth, had been done that the water-supply at the time available admitted of—before the scheme of the Assouan reservoir was adopted. About £E.3,800,000 had been spent from extraordinary sources upon irrigation since 1884, in addition to the ordinary maintenance and irrigation budget allotment, amounting annually to about £620,000. The details, broadly, were :—

Delta Barrage and Weirs .	£E.900,000
Development of Delta Canals	800,000
Drainage . . . . .	1,000,000
Remodelling Upper and Middle Egyptian basin } system . . . . .	1,100,000
	<hr/> £E.3,800,000 <hr/>

In this interval the canal *corvée* had been abolished, at a cost of nearly six million pounds Egyptian; dredging had been introduced on the main canals; regulating works had been repaired or built. A scheme of main and branch canals had been developed in the Delta. Control of the water-supply had been much improved; drainage works had been carried out at a cost of over a million. Protection from flood had been afforded by giving the Nile banks such dimensions as would guarantee reasonable security, by guarding against river encroachments with stone spurs

and revetments where erosion caused danger. By such means, operating since 1884, the cotton crop had been increased in quantity from three million cwt. to six million, in round figures; in value, from £7,500,000 to double that figure. Timely sowing of the maize crop had been assured; the cultivable area of Egypt had been increased from five to six million acres, and the value of land had been greatly augmented; while, in spite of all these betterments, the land revenue had been reduced from five to four and a half millions of Egyptian pounds.

The Assouan dam and the Assiut barrage were completed within the contract term of five years from February, 1898, and the accounts were closed in 1903.

The total probable expenditure on the Nile reservoir works, and the conversion of 451,000 acres in Middle Egypt from basin to perennial irrigation, will have amounted, in round figures, at the close of 1908, to about six and a half millions sterling. From 1884 to the close of 1908, after adding to this six and a half millions the sum of £E.3,800,000 spent as described at page 291, with another subsequent £300,000 for drainage, £200,000 for the further development of the Delta canals, and £E.500,000 spent on the Zifta barrage, or a total of £E.4,800,000, rather more than eleven million sterling will have been sunk in irrigation in Egypt, from loans or other extraordinary sources. To this may be added the many millions incurred by the abolition of the *corvée*, and an annual budgetary expenditure of about £E.620,000, which since 1884 has been devoted to maintenance.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE STATE DEPARTMENTS

Mr. McIlwraith's reforms—Larger expenditure—Increase of judicial fees—Summary and Markaz Tribunals—Village Tribunals—Courts of Circuit—Views of the Judicial Adviser—Revised Penal and Procedure Codes—Apparent increase of crime, how to be accounted for—Connexion between courts of justice and popular morality—Legislation by judges of Mixed Tribunals—Change of system probable—Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh—"No need of reform"—The Khedive's opportunity—Europeans and Egyptian Courts of Justice—Possible alternatives—Education—Growth of expenditure—Fees and attendance—Kuttab—Fikis—Aim of educational authorities in Egypt—Sketch of private kuttab—Jails—Land Revenue and Survey—Sanitation and medical—Dr. Sandwith's description of Kasr el Ainy Hospital in 1884—State Railways.

SIR JOHN SCOTT, in his time, furthered greatly the improvement of the Tribunals. In reforms of this nature, if circumstances remain favourable, progress as it moves onward acquires increasing impetus. But circumstances have lately been more than favourable, for since Mr. McIlwraith's assumption of office the finances have allowed larger expenditure. Thus, the expenditure of the Native Courts, which in 1898 was £E.166,862, was estimated in 1905 at £E.247,105, and the Budget Estimate for 1906 amounts to £E.263,247. Experience, moreover, acquired with successive years, establishes results which are utilized by new incumbents; the judges themselves, as time passes, gain increasing confidence. But every one who is impartial, or in the least degree acquainted with the past and present circumstances of Egypt, will agree that too much should not as yet be expected



from its Native Courts of Justice. The atmosphere of Egypt in all time past has been unfavourable to independence, or to purity; right has bowed its head to might; favour has smiled on the pliant; and honesty has gone empty away. These habits of mind are not changed in the course of a decade or two, like a system of canalization. Then there are difficulties of administration. The Tribunals, which are presided over by Englishmen trained in their own systems of law, administer codes which are based upon French principles of jurisprudence. The Procureur-General is an Englishman (an Egyptian was tried, but failed). The School of Law, alone of all modern schools of Egypt, is presided over by a French Professor; the medium of instruction is mainly the French language. It is not easy for an Englishman even to qualify himself as a judge in the Egyptian Tribunals; nor is the position, when secured, very attractive. In addition to knowledge of the principles of French jurisprudence, and to proficiency in French, the candidate is expected to acquire Arabic; the salary is not considerable; the judge of the Native Tribunals is overshadowed, on the one side, by the Bench of the Mixed Tribunals, and, on the other, he is cribbed and confined by the Native Courts, the *Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh*. The native Bar is young, and is on its trial; it has as yet acquired little consideration. Finally, in this as in most other Egyptian departments, funds have hitherto been needed. But there are many indications that little by little the Native Courts are beginning to gain public confidence; and, as mistakes are discovered, and the machinery from time to time is better adapted to the work it has to do, these courts, if jealously watched and controlled, will in course of years take their due place in the march of reform. Judicial fees have risen from £E.115,412 in 1898 to £E.175,310 in

1903; £E.206,313 in 1904; the estimate for 1905 was £E.185,000; for 1906, £E.240,000. As there has been decrease in the scale of fees, this is evidence of the greater use made of the courts by the general public. As the expense of the Native Tribunals is estimated in 1906 at £E.263,247, they are nearly self-supporting.

The summary Tribunals introduced by Sir John Scott have taken root, and now number forty-four, while the unappealable limit of their jurisdiction was raised in 1904 from £E.10 to £E.20. They have been supplemented, since Mr. (now Sir Malcolm) McIlwraith assumed office, by local Tribunals, known as Markaz, or district tribunals; a Markaz being a subdivision of a Mudiriyah, or province. There were sixty-four Markaz Courts in 1904; the number was subsequently increased to 104. The judges in these courts are ordinary magistrates from the Tribunals of First Instance; delegated, as the summary judges are delegated. One judge not infrequently combines both duties in himself. In future all police offences and most petty misdemeanours will be disposed of in the Markaz where they have been committed, penal powers having been given to these courts in certain small cases of misdemeanour, and in most cases of contravention. They have been empowered to pass sentences of imprisonment up to a month, and to impose fines up to £2. Prosecution in the Markaz Courts is conducted entirely by the police, without intervention by the Parquet, though subject to its supervision. A limited civil jurisdiction will be conferred probably on these Tribunals hereafter. Powers have also been conferred on the headmen in certain villages (at present no fewer than 614 exercise these powers), giving them jurisdiction in civil cases relating to personalty up to one pound Egyptian. The right of appeal in criminal cases has been lately done away with, by the establishment

of Circuit Assize Courts, whose decision—save in respect to reference on point of law to the Court of Cassation—will be final. (This Egyptian Court of Cassation is a Chamber of the Court of Appeal, and consists of five judges of that court; but they are not exclusively engaged in Cassation work.) All crimes will now be tried without appeal, by a court sitting periodically at the seat of the seven Central Tribunals, and composed of three judges of the Court of Appeal. The committing magistrates are taken from among the judges of the Central Tribunals. These do not examine witnesses; but decide on the record whether the evidence as laid before them by the Parquet discloses a sufficient *prima facie* case to warrant the trial of the accused at the Assizes. The system during the first year of its existence (1905) was applied to Lower Egypt only; but was, in the following year, extended to the rest of the country. It had been originally proposed to add two notables of the district acting as assessors without a vote. But the proposal raised such a general outcry that it was thought better to let it drop. "It is one of the most significant phenomena of the problem of government in Egypt," writes Sir Malcolm McIlwraith, "that, though the introduction of European officials and European methods is systematically denounced in native organs, yet the most gingerly step in the direction of conferring greater power and increased responsibility upon natives invariably inspires, in the upper classes, feelings of the most profound distrust, and, not infrequently, occasions an outburst of genuine alarm."

The Judicial Adviser, in his report for 1903, observes that in civil cases, as far as the law is concerned, the competence of the courts may be considered fairly satisfactory. The majority of the cases that come before them are of a simple character, and rarely offer special difficulty as to the



law. The penal side of their work is, also, in the main, exceedingly simple, as far as concerns law. The same sets of circumstances constantly repeat themselves, and the cases presented turn nearly always on a very limited number of articles in the Code. The right decision depends, in the vast majority of cases, on discrimination in questions of fact and on the power to gauge the value of evidence. It is in these respects, in the exercise of judicial discretion, and in the measure of punishment awarded—which is often absurdly inadequate, especially in cases where the offenders have a bad record, and in matters gravely affecting public security—that native judges are chiefly prone to err. There is also a marked tendency to frequent and unnecessary adjournments. “In spite, however, of the disparagement of which these courts are not infrequently the object, there is no doubt whatever that the native judges, as a body, are steadily improving. Not only is there a marked advance in the degree of legal ability displayed by the more recent recruits to their ranks, but the general standard of morality and integrity has, of late years, appreciably risen. A good many of the least desirable elements have been gradually eliminated. . . . If, therefore, there be no relaxation in the efforts and activity of all concerned, I see no reason to despair of ultimately attaining to a native Bench which, at any rate, with a moderate European leaven, should inspire the fullest confidence.”

Revised Penal and Criminal Procedure Codes came into force on the 15th of April, 1904, by which, while arrangement has been systematized, many obscurities have been cleared up, and technicalities removed. Lenity to first offenders, severity to habitual criminals, rigour towards cattle-poisoners, and destroyers of crops, who in an agricultural community are frequent and grave offenders, mark



the new penal code. With a view to the better checking of offences, there is also some stiffening of penalties all round.

The direction in which Sir John Scott and Sir Malcolm McIlwraith have worked points clearly to decentralization. The former established Summary Courts to relieve the ordinary tribunals; the latter has gone further by the addition of the petty District and Village Courts, and by the establishment of Assize Courts. These several measures, bringing justice, as they will, almost to men's doors, and, through partial abolition of appeal, ensuring greater rapidity in the disposal of criminal work, should do much toward making the Tribunals prompt and effective. The apparently high ratio of crime in Egypt is constantly exercising the minds of the authorities. While the more violent class of crimes, which were formerly very numerous, such as attacks by armed bands, with or without murder (in India known as "dakaities"), has almost been suppressed, smaller offences seem to increase. In Egypt as in India, arson, bludgeoning by bullies in the pay of adjacent landlords, cattle-poisoning, with occasional murders, or attempts at murder, largely swell the statistics of crime. Lord Cromer is inclined to ascribe what increase of crime there may be to the fatness of Jeshurun. "Large numbers of persons, who but recently were very poor, have now become moderately rich. Having tasted the enjoyment of wealth, they wish to become richer; and in their desire to attain their object, they are far more frequently than heretofore brought into collision with others who are seeking precisely the same objects as themselves." Envy or jealousy may also be often at work; and the disappearance of brigandage, which was largely the work of starving and desperate men banded together against the more well-to-do, may possibly be traced to causes which have

led to increase in less formidable classes of offences. But it may be also that crime is more generally reported than in former and laxer days, and seems therefore to be more prevalent ; while, if Indian experience may be trusted, the stripping of Mudirs of all judicial powers has crippled the most formidable influence with which the criminal has had hitherto to contend.

We must remember that little more than twenty years have passed since the infamy into which the courts had fallen moved Sir Edward Malet to his cry for justice—though in that term he no doubt included more than merely the judicial element ;—while it furnished Lord Dufferin with the most scathing paragraphs in his report of 1883. Arbitrary rule, and judicial probity, are at opposite ends of the pole. Egyptians who have barely attained middle life, who were born early in the sixties, let us say, grew up under Ismail Pasha, and sucked in submission with their mothers' milk. The traditions handed down to them were based on the expectation that those should take who have the power, and they should keep who can. All the many millions devoted to irrigation in Egypt could not have altered by a hair's breadth, in so short a term as the British period of occupation, servile habits of mind encouraged by lapse of countless years, and maintained by unchanging usage. It takes many centuries to make a free man. To say that the Tribunals are inefficient is to frame one more indictment against arbitrary rule, and to furnish yet another illustration of the manner in which the curse of despotism corrupts, not the Courts of Justice only, but the people who resort to them. Reform of the Native Courts may in a measure precede reform of national habits of mind, but can never be very far ahead of it. The one must react upon the other. Though the judges should raise the character of the Egyptians from

amongst whom they are chosen, the Egyptian will still be reflected in the character of his judges. Meanwhile, it is to the credit of the Criminal Courts that more than one offender, high in place and in power, has been condemned by them to penal servitude. Supported as these courts are by the whole weight of British influence, they will become, as time passes, more and more a terror to evildoers and a barrier against high-handedness. The future of Egypt is, in large measure, in their hands. If the judges can succeed in arresting oppression and illegal action on the part of the official world, in redressing the balance between authority and the subject people, in instilling into their countrymen respect for law and belief in its honest administration when conflicting claims compel them to resort to it, they will have taken a vast share in national reform, and in furthering the political regeneration of their country.

The relations of Egypt with the Mixed Tribunals scarcely enter into the scope of this volume. These concern, rather, the sphere of international diplomacy. But of late years the legislative, no less than the judicial, functions of the Mixed Courts have become important. Legislation by diplomacy, and after obtaining the consent of a great number of separate Governments to each several project proposed, has shown itself to be absolutely impracticable. In recent years an arrangement has been made with the Powers under which the Egyptian Government, with the assent of the General Assembly of the Mixed Courts, can enact regulations or by-laws to deal with various police offences. For effecting more important changes in the law a Commission, composed of the diplomatic representatives of various Powers, has, from time to time, been assembled in Egypt. Each such representative is assisted by a legal adviser, who is almost invariably



a judge of the Mixed Courts. These latter, again, form sub-commissions. The Powers are free to accept or to reject the views of the sub-commissions, or of the full Commission. Although, therefore, the judges of the Mixed Courts do not make the law, all laws applicable to the whole population of Egypt, whether European or native, are made almost exclusively on their advice. The arrangement, in the present very anomalous circumstances, is probably the best that could be devised; but it is obviously open to the gravest objection. International rivalries are aroused; the rapidly growing increase and influence of Europeans in Egypt create fresh problems and add to the difficulties of those that already exist; many-sided commercial or special experience is wanting on the Commissions and sub-commissions; the business of judges is not to legislate, but to judge; finally, the British element in the administration of Egypt is a guarantee for the adequate working of some system of legislation for Europeans less unsuited to the rapidly growing needs of the country. Proposals are believed to be now before the Powers with a view to modifying the existing procedure.

English, it may be noted, has very recently been added to French, Italian, and Arabic as one of the languages which the Mixed Courts are required to admit in the course of pleadings before them.

As to reform in the *Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh*, it is for the Muslim themselves to move. In no direction could the Khedive more usefully or honourably give his countrymen a lead. A member of the Legislative Council announced in 1903 that nothing connected with the *Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh* stood in any need of reform; and a majority confirmed the proposition. In the following year, on the initiative of the General Assembly, the Legislative Council



reversed this opinion, admitting that the efficiency of the Mehkemeh, and the prompt disposal of cases brought before them, invited attention. It is peculiarly a case in which much assistance could be looked for from the tact and firmness of an enlightened Muhammadan ruler. As yet there would seem to be no sign that the Khedive has vindicated his right to be the head of the Muhammadan community in Egypt, by insisting at least on the removal of incapable and corrupt co-religionists from the benches of the Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh, or by exerting himself to bring that Tribunal into line with the social and economical development of the Egyptian.

The administration of justice in Egypt, in its relation to European subjects, is a matter which, though very delicate to handle, must be taken up at no very distant day. In his despatch to Sir E. Monson, of April 8th, 1904,<sup>1</sup> Lord Lansdowne, referring to the Capitulations, intimated that, in Lord Cromer's opinion, the time was not yet ripe for any organic changes in the jurisdiction of the Consular Courts and of the Mixed Tribunals. Whenever Egypt, he added, was ready for the introduction of a legislative and judicial system similar to that which exists in other civilized countries, we have sufficient grounds for counting upon French co-operation in effecting the necessary changes. The question is handled by Lord Cromer in his annual report for the year 1904, and by Mr. Brunyate, one of the legal advisers of the Egyptian Government, at greater length, in a note at the end of that report. Three solutions present themselves. Egyptian Courts may be absorbed by existing international institutions; or, either as at present existing or as created *ad hoc*, they may assume some at least of the functions now discharged by the Mixed Tribunals, and by the Consular Courts; or

<sup>1</sup> See page 340 of this volume.

criminal jurisdiction over Europeans may be transferred to the Mixed Tribunals.

The first and last are beyond the range of possibility. Extension of the international principle in Egypt, since the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, would be a blunder of the greatest magnitude. The efforts of the British Government tend, on the contrary, to free Egypt from such of the international bonds as are still wound round it. On the other hand, for the present, and for years to come, there can be no question of conferring on native Egyptian Law Courts, except possibly in trifling cases, criminal jurisdiction over Europeans. Europeans accused of any serious offence must be tried by Europeans. The question, therefore, as Lord Lansdowne, quoting Lord Cromer, writes, is not yet ripe for the introduction of organic change. All that can be said is that, in the presence of an Egyptian administration which is guided and controlled by Great Britain, the maintenance of Consular Courts under the Capitulations, the *raison d'être* of which is distrust of purely Oriental Courts of Justice, becomes untenable; but that the Mixed Tribunals, being international, and, as such, wielding an influence which is unfavourable to the evolution of Egypt under British influence, cannot be looked upon as possible successors to these Courts. Courts somewhat similarly constituted to the Mixed Tribunals as regards the personnel of the officiating judges, but exercising jurisdiction in the name of the Egyptian Government, and with the support of Great Britain, instead of on an independent and international basis as at present, might possibly in the course of no very long time be worked into the framework of Egyptian institutions.

Probably no department of Egypt has greater claims, or

has been in more urgent need of funds, than the Educational Department. If the exceeding bitter cry of many administrations has gone up to the Finance Committee, few have deserved more sympathy than that whose business it is to instruct and to prepare for active life the young generation ; and to lighten future problems of the State, not only by supplying it with a competent agency, but by assisting in the creation of useful citizens. Nothing brings before the eye more vividly than the reports of the various departments the difficulty which the financial authorities must have experienced in giving to the policy of remission of taxation priority above other needs. It was not a pleasant policy either for those who enforced it, or for the administrations which were called upon to accept. Able men at the head of the several departments, anxious to justify their selection, but condemned to make bricks without straw, expressed themselves, as the years passed, with increasing energy. They could not be expected at all times to remember that although the wants of the departments were obvious, the needs of the taxpayer were known only to himself. It was not till the close of 1898, when outer danger was over and many internal burdens had been removed, that the purse-strings could be materially loosened. Thus the expenditure on public instruction, which, inclusive of Government grants, school fees, and all other sources, amounted to £E.155,961 in 1900, had risen to an estimated figure of £E.276,200 in 1906. In the years 1886 and 1887, when the great struggle against internationalism was going on, expenditure on education had fallen to £E.68,789 and £E.62,971, respectively. In 1896 the income for the first time exceeded £E.150,000 ; but the marked rise has been from 1900, from which date onwards the expenditure, inclusive of all sources, has annually increased as follows :—

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1900	.	.	.	.	.	£E.155,961
1901	.	.	.	.	.	£E.173,353
1902	.	.	.	.	.	£E.185,455
1903	.	.	.	.	.	£E.197,791
1904	.	.	.	.	.	£E.214,450
1905		(estimated)		.	.	£E.234,800
1906		"	"	.	.	£E.276,300

State education in Egypt commences with the primary schools, or "Kuttabs"; which again are divided into State kuttabs, and kuttabs inspected under a grant-in-aid system. Next are the higher primary, and finally the secondary schools. Supplementary to these are technical schools; a school of agriculture; a polytechnic school of engineering; a school of medicine; a school of law; and training schools for teachers. For female education, which of late seems to have aroused real interest in Egypt, there are kuttabs, higher primary schools, normal departments for training female teachers, and a training school for nurses and midwives.

Here are a few comparative figures, illustrating the rapid increase in attendance at the various schools:—

		Attendance in	
Government Kuttab :—		1900	1905
Boys	.	3323	5570
Girls	.	643	1831
Higher Primary :—			
Boys	.	6269	6821
Girls	.	220	360
Secondary	.	569	1348
Technical :—			
Agriculture	.	54	71
Boulak Technical.		331	427
Mansura Industrial		32	68



Professional Colleges :—	Attendance in	
	1900	1905
Medicine . . .	62	116
Law . . . . .	102	273
Engineering . .	50	57
Training Teachers . .	74	297

The revenue from school fees amounted in 1905 to £E.90,050 as compared with £E.40,443 in 1900. Ninety-two per cent of the total attendance in Government schools consists of paying pupils. Free education has been abolished in all schools above the primary grade, excepting in normal schools, girls' schools, and the Boulak Technical School. The proportion of pupils receiving instruction in English and French respectively in 1905 was 96 to 4, the figures being 8962 to 370. Since 1899, after the reconquest of the Soudan, and the revival of harmony between the foreign and the native elements, the increase in English scholars has become more especially marked.

Besides having 158 schools (including kuttabs) and colleges directly under its management, the Public Instruction Department had also under inspection, during 1905, 4859 private kuttabs, attended by 145,694 children (136,083 boys and 9611 girls), and 14 private higher primary schools (9 Muhammadan and 5 Coptic), attended by 3491 pupils (3376 boys and 115 girls). The total increase of pupils under direct management or inspection was from 27,000 in 1900 to 166,644 in 1905. But the private kuttab scholars, like Falstaff's recruits, are more remarkable for numbers than for worth.

The indigenous kuttab is largely used by a class of students who, though otherwise illiterate, propose to themselves to commit to memory the whole of the Korán. These men are known locally as "fiki"; a man who has achieved the position of a fiki is exempted from military conscrip-

tion. The fiki is virtually a religious mendicant, with a prodigious memory, which he employs in reciting the Korán at funerals and festivals. As, in the census of 1897, there were as many fikis (100,000) as there were artisans, religious mendicancy would seem to be no less agreeable a calling in Egypt than in mediæval days it proved itself in Europe. How long the fiki who cannot read or write will remain exempt from conscription must depend on the forbearance of his compatriots. "Exemption is granted to fikis as members of a religious order," writes the head of the Educational Department, Mr. Douglas Dunlop; "it seems not unreasonable that the qualification for such an order should include at least the rudiments of education." This is unanswerable; but, whether in East or West, appeals to prejudice from reason are rarely well received.

The aim of the Educational Department is to provide an efficient kuttáb in every village and in every quarter of every town; to establish a vernacular school of a somewhat higher grade than the kuttáb in the chief town of the seventy-six districts (Markaz), and in each of the six town-governorships (muháfiza) of the country; and to associate these schools with agricultural and other industrial occupations by organizations for facilitating apprenticeship, and by the creation of industrial schools. This is as yet a counsel of perfection; and the Government cannot attempt the task alone. Local interest and local aid must gradually be secured. To that end the very able head of the Educational Department devotes his great energies; and, supported by the Agent, he may hope for gradual success. With an illiterate population of 88 per cent there is need of all Mr. Dunlop's capacity.

Educational policy in Egypt looks mainly to elementary vernacular instruction, to secondary education, and

to technical instruction, in one or other of its branches. The Government primary kuttabs are excellent, but they are few; the private inspected kuttabs are less satisfactory; the purely indigenous kuttabs are abominable. Nothing is more striking than the contrast between the order, cleanliness, and appointments of the Government kuttab, or, in a lesser degree, of the inspected kuttab, and the filthy disorder and primitive arrangements of the purely indigenous primary school. Crowded into a dingy and dirty loft, approached by crazy and noisome stairs from out a narrow lane, may be found boys of all ages squatted on the ground, reciting in loud discord their momentary task, tracing it in black letters on white kerosine tins, or intermittently dozing, while a blear-eyed, ill-favoured, uncleanly teacher stumbles in from his nap in a side closet to do the honours of the academy to the visitor. The order, neatness, and method are wholly wanting which make the Government, or the Government-inspected, schools bright and cheerful. Secondary education is needed for the middle class, who supply the great bulk of officials and clerks throughout the country. No candidate for the upper division of the civil service can enter it without a secondary education certificate. The State in Egypt does not aspire to higher education, such as has reached premature and rank development in India; but contents itself with lateral expansion in the various technical schools, both of the higher and lower classes. In these schools lads are carefully trained for professional or industrial employments which of late years have greatly increased in number. With the development of Egypt, the demand for qualified subordinates in these directions is likely to become almost indefinite.

The Jail Department, like other administrative depart-

ments, has waited its turn for supplies, and till recent years has made the best shift it could, with the funds placed at its disposal. As late as 1902 friends of the prisoners were still occasionally called upon, after native fashion, to provide for their subsistence while in prison. The annual State expenditure has risen from £E.25,936 in 1890 to £E.71,382 in 1904 (besides expenditure debited to the jail receipts of each year of comparison; in 1904 these receipts amounted to £E.7000). The estimate for 1906 (exclusive of such receipts, which will now be separately shown and credited to Government) is £E.117,032. Annually, also, building grants are accorded. There are two convict prisons, where quarrying and such-like work is carried on, and ten central prisons, one of which is for females, besides a very large number of "local prisons," many of which would be of the nature of lock-ups. There is also attached to the Jail Department a lunatic asylum, with accommodation for 80; and a reformatory, of which the inmates numbered 126, in 1904. A new reformatory for 500 boys and 100 girls is about to be constructed.

Eight central and two penal servitude prisons have been built since 1883 at a cost of £E.210,000, and a new central prison is to be built at the barrage. A total of 96,229 males and 9990 females were committed to the several prisons during 1904; the average jail population during the year being 11,928. Mortality was 19·8 per thousand, on the average jail population. A considerable profit is realized on total sales of various articles manufactured in the jails, and amounted in 1904 to £E.14,157. Overcrowding has been the difficulty since 1883, and is still complained of, but further prison accommodation is about to be provided. To Cruickshank Pasha and to Coles Pasha, his successor, is due the credit of having reformed Egyptian jails.



Reassessment of the Land Revenue, and the several surveys of Egypt, have made very great progress. In 1895 Commissioners were appointed, as has been explained in previous pages, to assess the rental value of all lands in the country on which fixed rates of tax were being paid, with a view to obtaining a basis for a more equal distribution of the whole amount. Every village in Egypt is subdivided in the land register into tracts of various sizes known as "hōd" (Arabic, "hauz," a cistern). The "hōd" has been taken as the unit of assessment. The work of assessment and compilation was completed in 1897, but readjustment of the land revenue in the several provinces awaits completion of the Cadastral Survey. Relief was meanwhile given where the land revenue was known to press heavily. In 1898, with the consent of the Powers, a yearly sum of £E.216,000 was allotted for ten years, from the general reserve fund, to meet this charge. Periodical revisions of the assessment of land revenue, as known in India, are not practised in Egypt. The aim of the Commissioners has been rather to equalize the incidence of the land revenue than to adjust it more or less scientifically to the economical conditions of the existing hour. The Cadastral Survey is now nearly completed (one province, Beni Suef, in Upper Egypt, alone remains), and the readjustment of Land Revenue follows closely on its footsteps. The survey of Egypt, under the very capable control of Captain Lyons, R.E. (retired), is being excellently carried out. A general map of the country on a scale of  $\frac{1}{250,000}$ , or four miles to an inch, is in preparation. Topographical maps of Egypt on the scale of  $\frac{1}{50,000}$  will be published within two years; the publication of topographical maps on a scale of  $\frac{1}{100,000}$  is also in hand. Before the close of 1906 the whole of the cultivated lands of Egypt will have been

surveyed in the form of village maps on the scale of  $\frac{1}{40000}$  or  $\frac{1}{25000}$ , and all the map sheets will have been printed, except in the Provinces of Sharkiyeh and Beherah. The village maps resemble those now prepared by the Survey Department in India, each map being printed in large numbers for distribution and for sale. Egypt in a very brief time will thus be provided with as good maps as those now made for Indian villages. As in India, simultaneously with the village map there is prepared at survey a register of rights based upon actual possession, and it will become the care of the Finance and Survey Department to see that the maps and registers are kept up to date.

Sanitation, which is the stumbling-block of the East, presents the usual problems in Egypt; but the flatness of the Delta and the large urban population in Cairo and Alexandria add to the customary difficulties. Drainage schemes for Alexandria (which since 1890 has a municipality), as well as for Cairo, have been much debated, but still await decision. The water-supply for Alexandria has received attention; a new scheme has been agreed to, by which 36,000 tons of pure filtered water will be daily provided by an installation of the latest and most approved automatic type. Free taps are established in Cairo for the use of the poor. Artesian wells now in course of construction will supply far purer water to that town than the water hitherto obtained from the Nile. In various towns of Egypt water-supply has been provided, or is in course of provision. Cemeteries have been closed in large numbers; the water-supply in the mosques required for ceremonial purifying of the person has been improved; taps with running water taking the place of the former stagnant basins, which each person used in turn. The shallow depressions known locally as Birket which abound near all

Egyptian villages, and which are the borrow-pits from which the village houses have been constructed, are in considerable numbers being filled up.

"The children of the town play round these Birkets, the women wash their clothing in them, and the cattle are allowed to drink from them. The latter, owing to drinking this foul water, contract a disease of the throat which often proves fatal; the inhabitants, in all probability, become infected with a small parasitic worm, which causes the advanced anæmia which is so prevalent among the fellah population of Egypt, and to which so many deaths are due." (Page 44, Lord Cromer's Report, 1901.)

Plague and cholera are the most formidable enemies that sanitation has to contend with. The former for some years past has been rarely absent. Egypt has been infected with plague since 1899, but the mortality it has caused shows no rise in the curve of general mortality throughout the country. This may be due to the watchfulness and energy of the sanitary authorities, and to the measures taken to disinfect clothes and houses, to isolate the sick, and to guard persons who may be obliged to handle the dead from contracting the disease. Cholera, as we know, has visited Egypt with grievous results three times since the British occupation, nor will it probably be long before it again baffles the vigilance of the sanitary officers. To combat smallpox, vaccine is freely supplied from the Cairo Vaccine Institute to the villages, where vaccination is carried out through the agency of the village barber. These men are being gradually taught to vaccinate with some care and conscience; but as their labour is unremunerated, it cannot be very closely controlled. Vital statistics are still very imperfect. In country towns, and in villages where no sanitary officials reside, the cause of death is certified by the barber. Hospitals



and dispensaries have been from time to time opened at various towns; the principal hospital of Kasr el Ainy in Cairo is a model of good management. Twenty-seven thousand nine hundred and twenty-one were admitted into the Government hospitals in 1904; in 1893 the number did not amount to nineteen thousand. Save in the case of the really indigent poor, fees are exacted for treatment. "The principal function of Government is the prevention of epidemic diseases, not the cure of persons suffering from ordinary maladies."<sup>1</sup> There is no voluntary financial aid to hospitals or dispensaries in the country, no general system of local taxation. Excellent bacteriological institutes have been established in Cairo and Alexandria. The expenditure on sanitary services, including medical administration, has risen from £E.94,500 in 1897 to £E.232,303 in the estimates for 1906; but considerable sums have at times been granted from the General Reserve Fund for building purposes. To Sir John Rogers and Sir Horace Pinching is mainly to be ascribed the present development of medical and sanitary measures in Egypt; but their inception is due to Dr. Sandwith, whose description of the principal hospital in Cairo as he found it, when in 1884 he was first deputed to take charge of it, gives so graphic a picture of matters at that time,<sup>2</sup> and so aptly illustrates the purely superficial character of most of the former Khedivial institutions, that it may well be forced upon the reader's attention:—

"The building," he says, "consisted of a quadrangle surrounding waste land, studded with huge lebbek trees, which kept air and light from the windows. The walls contained nests of living snakes, in holes from which the

<sup>1</sup> Lord Cromer's Report for the Year 1903, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> "The History of Kasr el Ainy," by F. M. Sandwith, M.D., F.R.C.S. Reprinted from the "Records of the Egyptian Government School of Medicine," 1901.



plaster had long crumbled away. The ground floor was composed chiefly of dark, damp store-rooms, for here were situated the central stores of equipment for all the government hospitals. The pharmacy was the one bright and fairly clean place, and near by were several bins full of mouldy sulphate of iron, which seems to have been a favourite antiseptic against cholera. The patients' wards, as now, were in the upper two stories, but so closed in by doors and windows that there was an overpowering smell, and practically no ventilation, for most of them were very small, measuring only 17 ft.  $\times$  13 ft. The floors were made of broken, ill-fitting 'ballats,' which, being porous,<sup>1</sup> soaked in any septic liquids, while the rough walls and wooden ceilings were infested with bugs. The beds were in the same condition, for they were wooden planks resting on iron tressels, so that the patients often preferred to sleep in the corridors at night to try and escape from the vermin. There was practically no furniture except dirty tin drinking pots and platters. At night there were no candles available, and the corridors were dimly lighted by a narrow wick floating in oil. But the pervading horror of the hospital was the smell from the privies, which were built into the walls, and communicated directly with huge underground culverts, blocked at Low Nile, and at other times allowed to empty themselves into the river. The so-called drains from the dissecting room and dead-house also flowed into the Nile about a mile above the intake of the water supply of the city. Water was somewhat scarce in those days, and was brought upstairs by men carrying goat skins from a tap near the entrance of the hospital. The filtered water supply was unknown. A Turkish bath-room and kitchen stood where the post-mortem room now is, the kitchen being composed chiefly of cauldrons resting on brick uprights, between which there was an open fire. In the middle of the kitchen there was an open hole in the floor, leading into a cesspool, for the reception of offal and

<sup>1</sup> Samples of this old flooring can now be seen in the central path of the hospital enclosure.

bones. The food was all stewed, and was by no means bad. There were two meals, at noon and at sunset, consisting of bread, which was almost black, meat or fowl, rice, soup, and vegetables. The laundry was in the open air, supplied with muddy, cold water, and a series of boilers in which the water never boiled. It was, therefore, not to be wondered at that linen often came back to the wards covered with lice.

"Perhaps it is not surprising that hardly any single soul ever went to the hospital of his own free will, the exception being blind beggars who were driven there by poverty. Even they had to go through the trouble of visiting the Governor first in order to get a ticket of admission.

"The public of Cairo firmly believed that the hospital was merely a prelude to the cemetery, and that the sick were beaten and robbed by the attendants, and then poisoned by the doctors. And yet the number of hospital patients was often four hundred, made up of soldiers, policemen, Government employés, prisoners, foundlings, hospital children, idiots, and prostitutes, who sometimes numbered as many as two hundred, and converted their section into a pandemonium. All these different classes were kept there by order of the Governor. The hospital children numbered thirty-five, and were in perfect health, only living there because they had no home, and no one had seen fit to adopt them. No attempt was made to educate them, though some had reached puberty. Needless to say, no respectable woman ever applied to the hospital for advice, and no parent ever left his child in the wards for treatment. Six native professors of the school paid daily visits to the wards, divided into sections of surgery, medicine, ophthalmia, skin and venereal diseases, prostitutes, and women applying as a forlorn hope for operative midwifery.

"In the school there were also teachers of physiology, forensic medicine, anatomy, chemistry, materia-medica and physics, without hospital beds. Ninety male students, representing four out of the six classes, were supposed to

'walk' the hospital, but they were not allowed to enter the female wards, where there were thirty student midwives.

"Injuries and diseases of the most trifling character were sent by the police, and had to be admitted, and there was a complete absence of severe surgical cases, with the exception of scalp injuries, a few bullet wounds, elephantiasis patients, and some calculi awaiting lithotomy. There was no nursing, the attendants consisting entirely of worn-out old soldiers, who had been dismissed from the army, with, of course, no moral control over the patients. Serious cases could not be kept in bed, and trivial cases were allowed to lie in bed all day, if they wished it. There was a systematic absence of clinical teaching, note-taking, temperature records, urine testing, or any thorough physical examination. The medical diagnosis seldom advanced beyond 'anæmia' or 'gastric catarrh.' The dispenser accompanied the doctor on his round, wrote the prescriptions on a sheet of paper, copied them afterwards into a book, and then administered the medicine of twenty-four hours all in one dose. The professors of surgery were quite ignorant of cleanliness and antiseptics, and were so fearful of anæsthetics that most major operations, including lithotomy, were usually done without them.

"Three hundred pounds worth of surgical instruments lay neglected in the hospital, because no one in Egypt was capable of repairing them, until we introduced an English instrument-maker.

"Refractory patients were punished by confinement and by chains, anklets, and handcuffs.

"The unfortunate prisoners were not guarded, and were therefore obliged, whatever their illness, to wear chains round the ankles six feet long, weighing  $5\frac{3}{4}$  lb. In these chains they lived or died. There was no out-patient department, and post-mortems were never made unless the law specially required it. Stories of medico-legal cases were not such as to enhance the dignity of the profession, and several professors of the school accused their own



colleagues to me of taking bribes in connection with these cases, and with the examination of Government employés for pensions, of which there used to be about two thousand every year."

The Egyptian State Railway has been a weak point in the administration since the commencement of British occupation. Buildings, permanent way, locomotives, and rolling stock, alike suffered from want of funds in the latter years of Ismail Pasha's rule. All were in need of replacement by the aid of capital expenditure, but no capital was forthcoming; nor did matters mend for many years. The revenue from the railways of Egypt formed one of the securities of the Privileged Debt; and the railway, with the telegraph and the Port of Alexandria, was administered, like the Daira and Domains Estates, by an International Board, composed of an Egyptian, a Frenchman, and an Englishman. Forty-five per cent of the gross profits was allowed for cost of administration by the Convention of March, 1885; but if this, though subsequently modified to 52 or 54, was inadequate even to maintain the existing material in good order, it was wholly incapable of meeting the charges for fresh stock. The net revenues, with those of the telegraph and Port of Alexandria, did not suffice, till 1894, to meet the interest on the Privileged Debt, and the deficit had been made good from the revenues pledged to the Unified Debt. The President of the Railway Administration, writing in 1897, said that the buildings had all been neglected, and the running repairs to engines were woefully in arrears, owing to the impossibility of laying by an engine so long as it could move. The quantity of rolling stock was quite inadequate to meet present wants. It had never been abundant,



and the increase of traffic during the last ten years had rendered it ludicrously insufficient. Capital expenditure was needed; it was impossible that revenue should meet all charges. Grants were subsequently made from time to time from the General Reserve Fund, and matters somewhat improved. But the Caisse would not supply funds for maintaining stock in good repair, after it had been purchased with capital outlay; thus maintenance, in turn, became a heavy charge. In 1892-3 the present railway station at Cairo replaced the old tumble-down structure which visitors to Egypt in previous years will remember. The prosperity of Egypt is necessarily reflected in the railway revenue, whatever may be the condition of the lines. Since 1888, when extensions of the line were recommenced, more than five hundred miles have been added to the railway system, which now amounts to about fifteen hundred miles. Since 1883, the first year of the occupation, net receipts have risen from £E.692,916 to £E.1,084,000 in 1905, with an estimate of £E.1,196,939 for 1906. The number of passengers increased from 2,761,126 in 1883 to over 15,000,000 in 1904; the tonnage of goods from 1,176,382 to over 3,000,000. In 1890 and 1892 respectively considerable reductions of tariff took place in rates for goods and passengers, which were promptly followed, in either case, by rapid and large increase in amount and numbers. During the last few years the passenger traffic has again increased largely; the tonnage of goods carried has remained fairly steady. Gross receipts have been rising steadily and rapidly, but as the proportion of working expenses to receipts has also been raised, net receipts have fluctuated within narrow limits, and range a little on either side of one million Egyptian pounds. Owing to the enormous increase in river traffic, consequent on the abolition of Nile dues, it has been necessary to

make large reductions in the tariff. Many renewals to replace wear and tear, which were formerly charged to capital account, are now charged to revenue.

The Board of Administration which had existed since 1876 having been done away with owing to the Anglo-French agreement, the administration has been centred in British hands. A strong Commission, which came from England in 1904 to report on the Egyptian railways, has recommended among other matters that, outside any question of extensions, about a million a year should be spent for three years, with the object of putting the existing railways into proper order.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND MILITARY

Lord Cromer reaffirms his fiscal policy—Local needs must eventually be met by local rates—Disadvantages attendant on too rapid progress in State departments—Strength and disposition of Army—Civil Service: how recruited—Legislative Council—Its sphere in the administration.

WHILE very much has been done since 1883, much, it will be gathered, remains yet to be accomplished before the administration of Egypt approaches the limits of efficiency. You cannot eat your cake and have it; and a policy of light taxation is not compatible with heavy expenditure on the State departments.

In his Report for the year 1904, Lord Cromer, while with characteristic frankness summarizing the needs of the various departments, has repeated and reasserted his view of the policy which in this matter should guide the Egyptian Government. Buildings, he writes, are required in many directions. Metalled roads outside the immediate neighbourhood of a few of the principal towns do not exist. In Cairo and in the principal provincial towns the streets are still deplorable. Sanitation calls for better water-supply in the towns, and for a paid agency for the registration of births and deaths. The existing hospital accommodation is insufficient. Expenditure on public instruction must increase with the progress of the country. Salaries in every department must be raised. The pay of the police is too low. The pension

law requires remodelling. All this, too, though much has been expended. Thus, village watch and ward has been remodelled at a cost of £E.50,000. In the estimates for 1905 an increase of £E.600,000, in round figures, and in 1906 a further increase of about £E.1,000,000 has been provided for administrative expenditure. But this is a sop to Cerberus. The public needs seem to postulate early and heavy increase in budgetary allotments. But while not shrinking from putting forward all that from the point of view of the administration would seem most urgently to call for more ample funds, Lord Cromer maintains the courage of his convictions. "In the course of my long Egyptian experience," he writes, in 1905, "I do not remember any period when the contrast between the legitimate demands made on the Government Treasury, and the inadequacy of the annual resources of the Government to meet all these demands at once, has been so great as at present. . . . Under these circumstances, what policy should be pursued?"

The alternatives are additional taxation, whether general or local, or abstinence from taxation, and a scale of progress such as can be maintained with resources actually available. As will have been anticipated by any one who has followed these pages, Lord Cromer unhesitatingly pronounces for the latter course. He would impose no additional taxation, but would be content with such progress as can be made with existing sources of revenue.

"At present, there is a wide gulf between the requirements of the Europeans and of the educated portion of the native community on the one hand, and of the mass of the population on the other hand. The former might, perhaps, be reconciled to a system of taxation under which they would be rapidly provided with improved roads, streets, drains, lighting, etc. The latter, unless I am much mis-



taken, would greatly prefer relatively slow progress in such matters, accompanied by low taxation. This is the principle which has so far guided the action of the Egyptian Government."

It resolves itself into a question of time, of degree, and of measure. Wholly to regulate the pace of progress by the preference of the most backward section of the people in Egypt, which is, in other words, the mass of the people, would be to delay indefinitely. To contemplate, on the other hand, a scale of expenditure such as would be suited to the needs of the European community, would, in the absence of voluntary support, or of local rating, be unreasonable. But public security, public justice, adequate means of public transport, the public health, and public instruction, must always claim priority among civil needs. These are primary organic wants in society, and should be adequately provided for. Until these great departments are suitably equipped, lesser needs may wait, and it is obvious that in each of these State administrations very much remains in Egypt to be accomplished. So much is this the case that it is probable that before they have been fully furnished, local wants will be making themselves felt. As they develop themselves in Egypt, they will have to be met, gradually it may be, but probably in the larger towns before very long, by local rating, assisted possibly by State grants-in-aid. The maintenance of provincial roads, provincial hospitals, and primary provincial education, is a proper, and indeed may become before long a necessary charge on provincial rates and local assets. The main point to be assured of is that all sums locally assessed should be locally spent, through the agency and under the eyes of those who are chiefly to benefit by them. The grievance of much of the fiscal system in old days was that no one knew to what purposes the proceeds of taxation

were applied, and that few who were called on to contribute to the public purse felt that any of their own more pressing wants had been met from the supplies to which they had furnished their quota. Finally, it is obvious that reforms which have awaited the lapse of centuries may, without grave inconvenience, be introduced by degrees, so long as they are not lost sight of, or (which in Egypt is little likely to occur) loudly called for by public clamour.

Looking at the question from another point of view, the rate of progress maintained in improving administration is by no means so important a factor as may at first sight appear. It is not so much the amount of money spent, as the spirit manifested in those who control and direct the several State departments, and the degree in which they succeed in imparting that spirit to their native subordinates, that in Egypt, as in India, is of the first importance. The end aimed at is as much educational as administrative. Whether £E.20,000 more or less are allotted to this or the other head of an administration is comparatively immaterial. What is of the greatest consequence is the habit of mind in which officials of all ranks and grades approach their business. Probity, a keen sense of responsibility, the zealous and punctual discharge of duties which are sometimes disagreeable, often uninteresting, and not infrequently exacting, the due performance of public functions regarded as a public trust, honest effort to learn and to profit by experience—these are matters which are supremely important; and until the qualities which make for these are permanently acquired and have become a tradition and rule of practice, allotments of increasing funds may even do more harm than good. The growth of qualities such as the above is not measured by pounds sterling or pounds Egyptian. They are not in any case easily acquired; but they can be acquired as easily with a low as with a high scale of ex-

penditure. It is, no doubt, gratifying to heads of departments to show results ; so many more schools established, so many more jails built, so many more towns supplied with wholesome water. But while the raising of the morale of the people is at least as high an aim as the raising of the standard of administrative accomplishment, it is less dependent for success on the volume of supplies. Again, it may be questioned whether any useful end is to be attained by pushing on to a perfection of administration far above and beyond the expectations or desires of the community interested. We must be careful not to confound the public interests with the interests of State administrators. There is a point at which the community may reasonably rest satisfied, while the public servant is still impatient to achieve results. In countries which are more or less arbitrarily administered, there is always risk of overgovernment, where the common needs of the community are subordinate to the energies and the ambitions of the several departments. Finally, the faster administrative progress is hastened under foreign rule, the less likely are the people of the country to be much associated with its growth or development. The machine becomes too delicate for the rough manipulation of native hands, and can be entrusted only to highly skilled operatives, especially trained to work it. The gulf between the foreigner and the native is thus widened ; and there grows up gradually a detached, if highly efficient official class, which, from its almost exclusive control over the wheels of State progress, seems rather to retard than to assist the efforts of popular endeavour. We have seen something of this kind in India. In that country the public service, in its British ranks, is for the most part so far ahead of popular development, that should it at any time, in any direc-



tion, seem likely to be overtaken by the slow but still advancing tide of native progress, it is inclined, like the courtiers of Canute, to bid the flood wait upon the king's pleasure ; or, still more positively, to recede. Too rapid a growth of State departments, following on very general and generous allotment of funds, is by no means, therefore, of unmixed advantage. How far considerations such as these may have influenced the policy of Lord Cromer may be matter of conjecture ; but it certainly rests on an administrative no less than on a political and economic base. It does not, of course, follow that because they are not filled with good things, the State services are to be sent empty away. The point contended for is that the method, the sense of order and proportion, and the conscience introduced and nurtured in men's minds by a well-organized though indifferently dowered administration, are at least of as high importance to the public as mere results accomplished, or a more advanced standard of administrative efficiency. As much method, as sane a sense of order, and as scrupulous a conscience, may be obtained with expenditure on a modest as on a larger scale ; the aim to be kept in view is as much moral as material.

The Egyptian Army, including the Soudanese, at present consists of 16,081 of all ranks. The war establishment is the peace establishment plus reserve, namely :—

Peace	.	.	.	.	16,081
War	.	.	.	.	<u>11,038</u>
					<u>27,119</u> men.

The active or field army is divided into :—

*Cavalry*: 4 Egyptian squadrons and 1 Soudanese squadron, of which 2 Egyptian and 1 Soudanese squadron are commanded by British officers, while 2 Egyptian squadrons are commanded by native officers.



*Artillery*: 1 Maxim battery, 4 Mule batteries, 3 Companies Garrison Artillery.

*Camel Corps*: The headquarters are at El Obeid. The corps consists of 3 mounted camel companies and one mule company, with a British commandant and 4 British majors. The companies are officered by natives.

*Infantry*: 9 battalions (Egyptian), 6 battalions (Soudanese).

Besides there is (at Kassala) an Arab battalion, and there are also a medical corps, department of works, supplies and stores, veterinary department, railway department, and staff and small units.

The period of service includes five years' service in the active army or marine, and five years' service in the reserve, or in the police or coastguard. Recruiting is by ballot. The liability of compulsory military service commences from the completion of the eighteenth year of age. Exemptions are granted on (*a*) payment, before balloting, of the sum of £20; (*b*) by reason of Government employment; (*c*) to sons of officers in the army; (*d*) for certain prescribed family reasons; (*e*) in virtue of religious exemptions. For Soudanese the period of service is ten years with the colours, and on discharge the option of joining a Government colony. No one is liable to be called up for enlistment after attaining twenty-seven years of age. Recruits, as a rule, are called up the third year after ballot, i.e. at about twenty-two years of age. The number available for conscription in each year is about 110,000 men; of this number about 70,000 are balloted, the remainder being exempted for various reasons. On an average, about 3000 men are annually passed into the reserve. Omitting the railway battalion, there are 63 British officers (though not all of them officers of the British Army) and 623 native officers.

The 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Egyptian battalions are officered entirely by Egyptians; the remaining five battalions, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 16th, are commanded by British officers, and have two British majors. The six Soudanese battalions, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and 15th, have each a British commandant and three British majors. There is also, at Kassala, in the Soudan, an irregular Arab Camel Corps battalion, locally recruited, composed of Hadendowas, Beni Amer, and Abyssinians, commanded by a British colonel, with five native officers, and numbering 168 men, with nineteen corporals and two company sergeants.

There are seven British officers with the Artillery, viz. one colonel, one lieutenant-colonel, and five majors, battery commanders. There are forty-three Egyptian officers in the Artillery.

The Egyptian army is located in three divisions, which are subdivided into seven first-class districts, and three second-class districts. In Egypt there is one first-class district, viz. Cairo; with one squadron of cavalry, one battery of artillery, one company of garrison artillery, three Egyptian infantry battalions, of which one goes to Alexandria from May to October; and supply, stores, and medical headquarters. The rest of the active army is in the Soudan. There is a Soudanese battalion in the Bahr-el-Ghazal district, at Kassala, Khartum, Kordofan, Sennaar, and the Upper Nile; while between Dongola, Berber, Khartum, and Suakin, six battalions of Egyptian infantry are distributed. Three Egyptian and one Soudanese squadron of cavalry are at Shendi, which is the cavalry headquarters, one horse and two field battalions of artillery at Halfya, near Khartum, one at Berber, and two garrison companies at Khartum.

The amount of exemption money being no higher than £20, all but the most indigent and least educated Egyp-

tians easily escape service. In 1904, 9147 conscripts, or about 9 per cent of those liable to conscription in the year, paid the sum required; 33 per cent were exempted on religious grounds; 16 per cent were absent from ballotage, and 58 per cent only, or 55,273, were balloted. The system of purchasing exemption in Egypt is not favourably viewed by the authorities, and in the Soudan the battalions are short-handed. Both matters are under consideration.

The cost of the Egyptian army is now about £E.647,000, the charge to the Soudan Treasury, which has been recently reduced, being about £E.126,000. A lump contribution to the British Treasury of £100,000 covers the cost of the British troops located in Egypt and in the Soudan.

In 1899 the Egyptian civil service was composed of 10,342 Egyptians and 964 Europeans, drawing salaries below £E.30; 213 Egyptians and 202 Europeans with salaries from £E.30 to £E.70; 45 Egyptians and 104 Europeans with salaries above £E.70; a total of 10,600 Egyptians and 1270 Europeans, of whom 455 are British. Of the 964 Europeans drawing salaries of less than £E.30 per month, many are engine-drivers, lighthouse-keepers, and others employed in various technical services. The Mixed Tribunals, the Caisse de la Dette, and the Quarantine Board, employed between them 540 Europeans, of whom 35 only were British. The Egyptian native civil service is divided into a higher and a lower class; for the former it is necessary to have obtained an educational secondary certificate, for the latter, a primary certificate. After selection by a board of officials, two years' probation is exacted. Young Englishmen appointed to the Egyptian and Soudanese Civil Service are generally taken from the universities as soon as they have taken their B.A. degree.



The selections are made by a committee of high British officials in Egypt and in the Soudan, in consultation with university authorities, and after personal interviews. A year after selection candidates are required to pass in Arabic, and are then eligible for appointment as vacancies occur.

Old habits of corruption, indifference, and *laissez-aller*, will take long to eradicate, but there is a general consensus of opinion that the native Egyptian Civil Service shows improvement, even in these years of its adolescence. Left to itself, however, without the leading and control of a limited number of Europeans, it could neither enforce nor maintain the present scheme or standard of administration. Within a few weeks, signs of disorganization would begin to show themselves; before a year had expired, the wheels of the State would drag heavily. In Egypt, as in India, the small European leaven leavens the whole lump. Lord Dufferin and Lord Cromer have both expressed themselves at various times vigorously on this subject; and any reasonable man who is even superficially acquainted with the East will recognize the force of their contention. There are a few admirable native Egyptian officials; as there are others who are of Syrian or other Eastern origin. An Egyptian pasha, who is a Syrian by blood, is at the head of the Post Office; another pasha, also a Syrian, who has recently retired from State employ, was at the head of the accounts department. Both men would have made their way in any country, and proved themselves invaluable public servants in Egypt. But neither of them was a Muhammadan; and it is the Muhammadans of Egypt of whom one primarily thinks when one speaks of Egyptians. The Copts supply most of the accountants; a few of their community, such as the present Minister of Justice, Boutros Pasha Ghali, rise deservedly to local eminence.



But, taken as a whole, the reformed public service is yet in its infancy, possessed neither of light nor leading in its upper grades, nor of a high standard of aim or efficiency in any rank. The strength of the Egyptian public service is to be found in the small group of Europeans who are distributed as advisers, assistants of advisers, or as inspectors, in the several Ministries, or who hold important administrative charges, such as that of the Customs. Without them the fabric would in a very brief while succumb from weakness within, and from pressure without. It would have neither confidence in itself, nor trust in its leaders. The standard of morality now set before it would speedily yield to the force of former habits, and to present prospect of gain. Very many years must elapse, and much Nile water will have flowed beneath the bridge of Kasr-el-Nil before the guidance of European officials can be dispensed with, or the public service be entirely entrusted to the Effendi, to the Bey, or to the local Pasha.

The Legislative Council meets at fixed intervals, and in his Report for 1903 Lord Cromer has summed up his views as to its present value. In this, as in all other matters connected with the revival of Egypt, time, he contends, is needed for due development. Sufficient experience has not yet been gained of the working of this institution. The evolution of Egypt will be reflected in the Legislative Council. But it may fairly be said that, more especially in quite recent time, the Legislative Council has occasionally performed some useful functions in the direction intended by Lord Dufferin. So far Lord Cromer; but had circumstances compelled the adoption of the scheme of administration in the conditions contemplated by Lord Dufferin, the position of the Legislative Council would have been very different. There would in such case have been no "masterful hand"; and, had the British occupa-

tion been withdrawn, the Council, except in so far as it might have leant for support on a European element in the conduct of State affairs, would have formed the chief defence against the encroachment of the Khedivial authority. Whether it would have proved itself strong enough to sustain this rôle, whether it would have presented a united front, or whether it would have allowed itself to be cajoled, bribed or intimidated, or all three, must remain matter for conjecture. Happily, it has not been called upon to face the ordeal. As it now exists and operates, it forms a medium of public education, and a safety-valve for the escape of noxious discontent. In matters within its immediate knowledge, such as the review of agricultural needs, or as the exponent of popular usage, or of local peculiarities, it shows itself accurately informed, and of a shrewd judgment. If it does not shrink from putting forth its opinions, it has proved willing to listen to views with some of which it can have had but little sympathy. All this is useful, inasmuch as it accustoms the general mind to temperate discussion of affairs, and to intelligent analysis of public measures, which is as much as can for the present be looked for. No reasonable man—certainly not Lord Dufferin, who devised it—expected from the Legislative Council more than the conditions of its existence would admit. The best that can happen is that the Council should hold on in its present course, while looking behind as well as forward; that it should bear in mind, in other words, the miseries and the dangers from which the people of Egypt have not long since escaped, as well as the privileges to which they may conceive themselves entitled. If the Deputies take a fair measure of the popular attitude in the past, they will better estimate their need of support from other than popular sources.

The brief and summary survey of the chief features of Egyptian public administration which has been attempted in foregoing chapters is necessarily most inadequate. Many minor matters, though not on that account matters of unimportance, have been omitted; but enough may have been said to convey an adequate conception of the process of development in which Egypt is engaged. If it is thought that more might have been accomplished, it must be borne in mind that reform has been designedly subordinated, first to financial, and then to fiscal considerations. Remarkable as are the results that have been gained, had questionable taxation been retained, funds would have been available for larger grants, and more striking results would have enabled Lord Cromer to flatter British self-complacency with greater show of progress. But this has not entered into the policy of the British Agent. He has deliberately and uniformly preferred to a greater display of efficiency, and to public plaudits, the claims of equity and the taxpayer. What funds he could make available were devoted in the first place to the increase of the produce of the soil. When he had accomplished the rehabilitation of the finances and the emancipation of the taxpayer, he turned his attention to reform. But it was only by degrees, and with the growth of revenue, that larger funds could be devoted to the public service. Scarcely had this pleasant path been entered upon, when Egypt found herself and her resources again engaged in a struggle, which absorbed for two and a half years much of her attention and not a little of her means. It was not till the close of 1898 that she was free to devote her united strength to her own internal interests. Even then, temporary assistance was called for by the crippled and prostrate dependency over which she had reasserted her protection. Much

remained still unprovided for within her own borders. In considering, therefore, the tale of domestic progress, we must bear prominently in mind the conditions in which it has been carried out, and the policy by which it has been regulated. But we may also remember that appeal has been wisely made on a considerable scale to private enterprise. If Lord Cromer has been unwilling to subordinate the taxpayer to the departments, he has not shrunk from entrusting to qualified private agency the duty of associating itself with the State in furthering the satisfaction of public needs; and that in a measure, and with a degree of success, which are in marked contrast with the line of action, or rather of inaction, adopted in this respect in India.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE ANGLO-FRENCH AGREEMENT AND AFTER

The fall of the curtain—Lord Cromer's *compte-rendu*—Marquis of Lansdowne's despatch regarding the settlement with France—Sums available in Egypt for capital expenditure—Further remissions of taxation in 1905—Outstanding debt—Public companies in Egypt—Lord Cromer's warning—Analysis of Customs return in 1883 and 1904—Imports and exports of specie.

WITH the close of 1903 we approach the final scene. Twenty years before, the curtain had risen on a distracted Egypt and a desolated Soudan. It seemed as though the floodgates of disorder were opened on the Delta, and that from the very mouth of Hell there issued upon Nilotic Africa the blast of destruction. Slowly the plot disentangled itself. Little by little, one after another, there appeared elements of hopefulness, of order, and of revival. Gradually confidence began to breathe again, and war was pushed farther back from Egyptian borders, till the Terror was driven south beyond the confluence of the two Niles. Then came the destruction of the Khalifa and his hosts, and the renewal and strengthening of security from the Equator to the Mediterranean. There remained only the final conciliation by the Western Powers of their seemingly discordant interests, and the restoration of amity and good understanding within the borders of Egypt herself. This, too, came to pass in the early days of 1904.

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With that happy consummation this story, so far as concerns Egypt itself, will be closed; and the first page of the chronicles of the book of the Anglo-Egyptian Soudan will be opened. Before proceeding to the final pages of Egyptian annals let us glance at the account rendered by Lord Cromer of his stewardship, when on the eve of his final success. For this true financier must needs look at public matters, above all, with the eye of the auditor, and test them in the scale of debtor and creditor. On the eve of the great emancipation, he must give to his masters, the Egyptian public, no less than to his colleagues in the Ministry, an accurate account of his stewardship; and like the honest bailiff that he is, take quittance of his charge from his employers, in terms of local currency.

The total receipts of Egyptian Government, he writes, in his Report for 1902, had been from 1882 to 1901 inclusive £E.224,206,151; the five several sources from which these receipts were obtained being divided into (*a*) ordinary revenue, £E.204,816,420; (*b*) loans and other sources, £E.14,799,703; (*c*) economies from the conversion of the Daira and Domains Loans, and interest on the investment of the economies fund £E.1,584,020; (*d*) proceeds of sales of lands, and interest on the investment of the general reserve fund £E.1,948,484; (*e*) miscellaneous receipts paid into the special reserve fund, inclusive of the advance paid by the British Government in aid of the Soudan campaign of 1898, £E.1,057,524. "The Egyptian taxpayers have a right to know how these large sums of money have been spent by their trustees," he goes on characteristically to say, and then he adds the following figures:—

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## I. ORDINARY EXPENDITURE.

	£E.
1. Khedivial Civil List . . .	5,919,917
2. Justice . . . . .	7,054,503
3. Public Works . . . . .	10,419,807
4. Education . . . . .	1,822,547
5. Medical and Sanitary Department . . . . .	1,852,515
6. Other Administrative Expenditure . . . . .	22,152,310
7. Expenses of Revenue-earning Administration . . . . .	20,769,036
8. Army . . . . .	12,368,109
9. Pensions . . . . .	8,655,745
10. Tribute (to Turkey) . . . . .	13,393,910
11. Interest on Debt . . . . .	79,448,786
12. Suppression of Corvée . . . . .	5,977,454
13. Soudan . . . . .	3,678,889
Total Ordinary Expenditure . . . . .	<u>193,513,528</u>

## II. EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURE.

DEBITED TO GENERAL AND SPECIAL RESERVE FUNDS,  
LOANS, AND OTHER RESOURCES.

### A. *Final Expenditure.*

	£E.
1. Alexandria Indemnities . . .	4,143,956
2. Irrigation and Drainage (exclusive of the construction of the Nile Reservoirs) . . . . .	4,120,121
3. Emission of Loans . . . . .	988,014
4. Commutation of Pensions and Allowances . . . . .	3,633,612
5. Public Buildings . . . . .	943,183
6. Postal Steamers . . . . .	210,569
7. Railways . . . . .	966,727
8. Soudan . . . . .	2,618,827
9. Miscellaneous . . . . .	759,943
	<u>18,384,952</u>

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## B. *Advances made from the General Reserve Fund, and repayable by the Government.*

	£E.
1. Public Buildings . . .	38,209
2. Railways . . .	907,618
3. Miscellaneous . . .	24,367
	<u>970,194</u>
Total Extraordinary Expenditure	<u><u>19,355,146</u></u>

	£E.
III. Paid into the Sinking Fund .	<u>896,741</u>
Total Expenditure, Ordinary, Extraordinary, and Sinking Fund . . .	<u><u>£E.213,765,415</u></u>

But the total resources placed at the disposal of the Government during the period under review amounted to £E.224,206,151. The total expenditure amounted to £E.213,765,415. There remains, therefore, a balance of £E.10,440,736. This is accounted for in the following manner :—

	£E.	£E.
I. Sum carried forward from year to year since 1890, owing to a change in the date of the settlement of the revenues assigned to the Debt .		1,253,914
II. Balance of the Conversion Economies Fund . . .		4,490,500
III. Balance of the General Re- serve Fund . . .		3,794,785
IV. Balance of the Special Reserve Fund . . .	1,287,352	
Less surplus of the years 1880-1	385,815	
		<u>901,537</u>
		<u><u>£E.10,440,736</u></u>



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Such was Lord Cromer's financial summary of eighteen years' labours; and the account which he renders of his stewardship to the people of Egypt whose trustee he has so long been. Let them compare it with the methods of their own rulers.

It will be noted that of the total figure of 193½ million ordinary expenditure no less than ninety-three million, in round figures, have been devoted to the Tribute and to Interest on the Debt; another 15½ million having gone to the Khedivial Civil List, to the Soudan, and to the suppression of the corvée; so that about eighty-five million only have been available from ordinary revenue for the use of Egypt during the twenty years of review. Of this sum, again, the Army has swallowed up over twelve million, leaving, say, seventy-three million as the resulting share of the Egyptian people in a total expenditure of 193½ million. To this may be added extraordinary expenditure for—

	£E.
Irrigation and Drainage . . .	4,120,121
Commutation of Pensions, etc. . .	3,633,612
Public Buildings . . .	943,183
Postal Steamers . . .	210,569
Railways . . .	966,727
Miscellaneous . . .	759,943
Paid into Sinking Fund . . .	896,741
	<hr/>
	£E. 11,530,896
	<hr/>

Annual expenditure on the nine and a half million people of Egypt itself had, therefore, averaged £E. 4,200,000 during the period in question.

Sir Eldon Gorst, who had replaced Sir Elwin Palmer as Financial Adviser in 1898, retired from his post in 1903 to become Assistant Under-Secretary of State in

the British Foreign Office. Sir Eldon had done excellent service as Adviser in the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior before he took over Finance. It was he who had succeeded in settling the police question; and, like his predecessor in the post of Financial Adviser, he brought to his new office considerable knowledge of the business and the people of the country. If his lot fell in comparatively easy times, he had to do constant battle with administrations contending each for its share in growing revenues; while the increasing crowd of concession-seekers, which in the last years of his office was multiplying beyond measure, found in him a very competent judge of their proposals, and a singularly hard-headed man of business. He was succeeded by Sir Vincent Corbett, who also belongs to the diplomatic service.

We have arrived at the last scene of the last act of our long Egyptian drama. Every difficulty has been overcome, every danger evaded. The anxieties, the contentions, and the jealousies of the last twenty-one years are about to be buried, with the evil memories of Mahdi and Khalifa, in the oblivion which best becomes them. The year 1904 marks for the Egyptian people a new departure; for the British Agent, it is the sum and ending of all his long struggles, disappointments, and endeavours since 1883. He deserved success, and had achieved it; his name passes henceforth into that bright roll of his countrymen which derives its lustre in Eastern history not from wars or bloodshed, but from a higher and more noble title: from benefits conferred and contentment assured to alien peoples, through wise administration and the fruitful arts of peace.

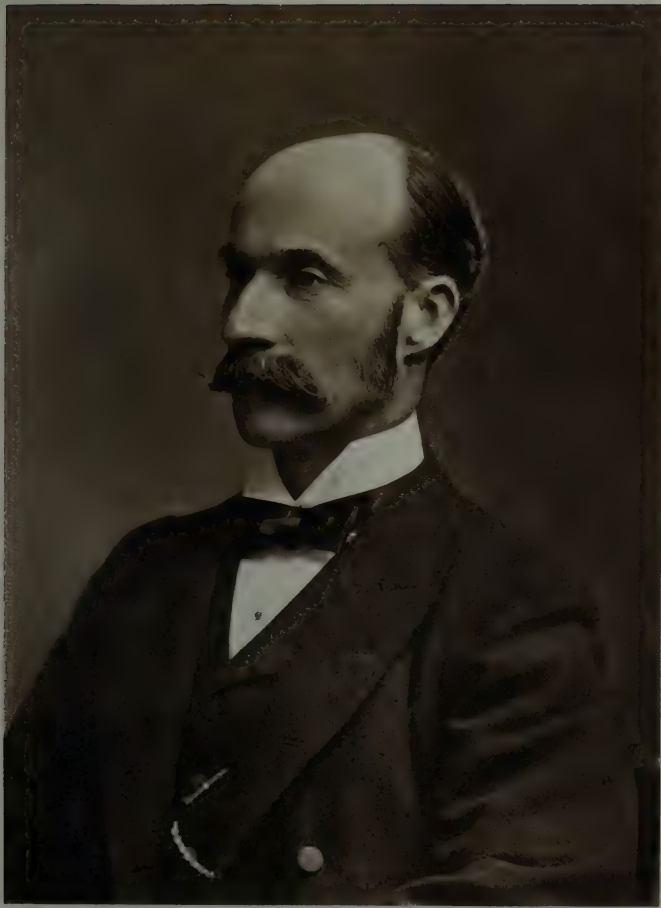
The substance of the Anglo-French agreement, which bears date the 8th of April, 1904, is embodied in a despatch of that date from the Foreign Secretary, the

Marquess of Lansdowne, to the British Ambassador at Paris, from which, in view of its extreme importance to our subject, the greater part so far as regards Egypt must be extracted:—

“From a British point of view there is no more remarkable episode in recent history than that which concerns the establishment and the gradual development of British influence in Egypt. Our occupation of that country, at first regarded as temporary, has by the force of circumstances become firmly established. Under the guidance of the eminent public servant who has for the last twenty years represented His Majesty’s Government in that country, Egypt has advanced by rapid strides along the path of financial and material prosperity. The destruction of the power of the Mahdi and the annexation of the Soudan have increased that influence and added to the stability of our occupation.

“But while these developments have, in fact, rapidly modified the international situation in Egypt, the financial and administrative system which prevails is a survival of an order of things which no longer exists, and is not only out of date, but full of inconvenience to all concerned. It is based on the very elaborate and intricate provisions of the Law of Liquidation of 1880, and the London Convention of 1885. With the financial and material improvement of Egypt, these provisions have become a hindrance instead of an aid to the development of the resources of the country. The friction, inconvenience, and actual loss to the Egyptian Treasury which it has occasioned have been pointed out by Lord Cromer on many occasions in his annual reports. It is well described in the following passage which occurs in Lord Milner’s standard work on Egypt:—

“‘The spectacle of Egypt, with her Treasury full of money, yet not allowed to realize that money for an object which, on a moderate calculation, should add 20 per cent to the wealth of the country, is as distressing as it is ludicrous. Every year that passes illustrates more forcibly the injustice of maintaining, in these days of insured



*J. Russell & Sons, photo*

*W. L. G. photo*

*Landman*





solvency, the restrictions imposed upon the financial freedom of the Egyptian Government at a time of bankruptcy—restrictions justifiable then, but wholly unjustifiable now. No one would object to the continuance of the arrangement by which certain revenues are paid in the first instance to the Caisse de la Dette. But as long as these revenues suffice to cover the interest on the Debt and to provide any sinking fund which the Powers may deem adequate, the balance ought simply to be handed over to the Egyptian Government to deal with as it pleases, and the antiquated distinction of “authorized” and “unauthorized” expenditure should be swept away. No reform is more necessary than this, if the country is to derive the greatest possible benefit from the improved condition of its finances which has been attained by such severe privations.’

“The functions of the Caisse, originally limited to receiving certain assigned revenues on behalf of the bondholders, have in practice become much more extensive. Its members have claimed to control, on behalf of the Powers of Europe, the due execution by the Egyptian Government of all the complicated international agreements regarding the finances of the country. Their assent is necessary before any new loan can be issued. No portion of the General Reserve Fund can be used without their sanction ; and all assigned revenues are paid directly to them by the collecting departments without passing through the Ministry of Finance. In the same way the receipts of the railways, telegraphs, and port of Alexandria, administered by a Board consisting of three members—an Englishman, a Frenchman, and an Egyptian—are paid, after deduction of the expenses, into the Caisse.

“The inconvenience of the arrangements which I have described has not been contested by the French Government, and they have shown themselves fully disposed to concert with us the means of bringing the system of financial administration into more close accord with the facts as they now present themselves.

"The first, and from the point of view of Great Britain the most important, part of the Agreement which has been concluded in respect of Egypt is the recognition by the French Government of the predominant position of Great Britain in that country. They fully admit that the fulfilment of the task upon which we entered in 1883 must not be impeded by any suggestion on their part that our interest in Egypt is of a temporary character, and they undertake that, so far as they are concerned, we shall not be impeded in the performance of that task. This undertaking will enable us to pursue our work in Egypt without, so far as France is concerned, arousing international susceptibilities. It is true that the other great Powers of Europe also enjoy, in virtue of existing arrangements, a privileged position in Egypt; but the interests of France—historical, political, and financial—so far outweigh those of the other Powers, with the exception of Great Britain, that so long as we work in harmony with France, there seems no reason to anticipate difficulty at the hands of the other Powers.

"The importance of this engagement cannot be over-rated. Although the attitude of the French Government in regard to Egyptian questions has been considerably modified of late years—in great measure owing to the harmonious relations which have recently prevailed between the Representatives of the two countries in Cairo—the possibility of French opposition has had, nevertheless, constantly to be taken into account; its disappearance will be an unqualified benefit to both Governments, and will greatly facilitate the progress of the task which we have undertaken in Egypt.

"It has long been clear that, in the interests of all parties, it was desirable to introduce very considerable modifications in the international arrangements established in Egypt for the protection of foreign bondholders. The new Khedivial Decree annexed to the Declaration and accepted by the French Government will, if it be accepted by the other Powers concerned, have the effect of giving

to the Egyptian Government a free hand in the disposal of its own resources so long as the prescribed payment of interest on the Debt is assured. The Caisse de la Dette will still remain, but its functions will be strictly limited to receiving certain assigned revenues on behalf of the bondholders, and insuring the due payment of the coupon. The Caisse will, as soon as the Decree has come into operation, have no right and no opportunity of interfering in the general administration of the country. The branches of revenue assigned to the service of the Debt have also been changed, and the land tax has been substituted for the customs duties and railway receipts. This arrangement will give the bondholders the advantage of having their rights secured on the most stable and certain branch of the Egyptian revenue, and one which shows a constant tendency to increase. On the other hand, the Egyptian Government will no longer be hampered in the administration of the customs and railways, and, as a corollary, the mixed administration which has hitherto controlled the railways, telegraphs, and port of Alexandria, will disappear.

"The fund derived from the economies of the conversion of 1890, which since that date has been uselessly accumulated in the coffers of the Caisse, and which now amounts to £5,500,000, will be handed over to the Egyptian Government, who will be free to employ it in whatever way most conduces to the welfare of the people.

"Though we still maintain our view as to the right of the Egyptian Government to pay off the whole of their debt at any time after 1905, the French Government have strongly urged the claims of the bondholders to special consideration, in view of the past history of the Egyptian Debt. In order to meet their wishes in this matter, the present arrangement provides that the conversion of the Guaranteed and Privileged Debt shall be postponed till 1910 and the conversion of the Unified Debt till 1912—a postponement which confers a very material advantage on the existing bondholders, and should remove all grounds of complaint whenever the conversion is carried through.



"The Decree abolishes various other provisions of the old Law which experience has shown to be unnecessary and inconvenient. It will be sufficient to mention the two most important of these. In the first place, the consent of the Caisse will no longer be necessary in the event of the Egyptian Government desiring to raise further loans for productive expenditure, or for other reasons. In the second place, the plan devised in the London Convention of fixing a limit to the administrative expenditure of the Egyptian Government has been swept away. The manifold inconvenience, and even loss, to which this system has given rise in a country which is in the process of development, and where, consequently, new administrative needs are constantly making themselves felt, have been frequently pointed out by Lord Cromer.

"Your Excellency will not fail to observe that the Khedivial Decree in which these measures are embodied will require the consent of Austria, Germany, Italy, and Russia before it can be promulgated by the Egyptian Government. The amount of the Egyptian Debt held in these countries is, however, quite insignificant. France and Great Britain, indeed, between them hold nearly the whole of the debt, with the exception of the small proportion which is held in Egypt itself. In these circumstances it is reasonable to hope that no serious difficulties will be encountered in other quarters regarding proposals which are considered by the two Governments as giving entire satisfaction to the legitimate interests of the bondholders, and which those two Governments are formally pledged to support. Should, however, unexpected obstacles present themselves, we shall, in virtue of our Agreement with France, be able to count upon the support of French diplomacy in our endeavours to overcome them.

"It is necessary that I should add a few words as to the other points in which the internal rights of sovereignty of the Egyptian Government are subject to international interference. These are the consequences of the system known as that of the Capitulations. It comprises the

jurisdiction of the Consular Courts and of the Mixed Tribunals, the latter applying a legislation which requires the consent of all the European Powers, and some extra-European Powers, before it can be modified. In Lord Cromer's opinion the time is not ripe for any organic changes in this direction, and His Majesty's Government have not, therefore, on the present occasion, proposed any alterations in this respect. At the same time, whenever Egypt is ready for the introduction of a legislative and judicial system similar to that which exists in other civilized countries, we have sufficient grounds for counting upon French co-operation in effecting the necessary changes."

The summary of the substance of the international agreement given in these paragraphs is not exhaustive. Thus, the Caisse not only still remains, but the period of its maintenance is expressly declared to be co-terminous with the entire liquidation of the funded Debt; in other words, the Caisse will linger on till 1912, during which time the salaries of six Commissioners, eating the bread of idleness, will be paid from the revenues of Egypt. To be condemned to linger on, the sole survival of past abuses, is a sorry ending to a body of men whose predecessors in earlier years rendered signal service. A sum of £E.1,800,000 is placed as a reserve fund in the hands of the Caisse, and a further sum of £E.500,000 is added as a working balance. While the decisions of the Caisse will be taken by majority, any single member can institute a suit against the Government for neglect or violation of any of the articles of the new agreement, so far as it concerns the funded Debt. In lieu of former securities, the gross amount of the Egyptian land revenue is assigned as pledge to the Caisse, with the exception of the Province of Keneh, which remains as security to the Domainial Loan. The land revenues from the Provinces given as security to the Guaranteed, Privileged, and Unified Debts,

must not be reduced below £4,000,000 without the consent of the Powers. The Domainial Loan cannot be redeemed before January 1st, 1915.

By that date, therefore, the traces of Ismail Pasha's insolvency will no longer be found on the face of Egyptian administration, though the public debt will remain to testify to it. After 1915 the waters will have closed over all, and no sign will be left of the great shipwreck. Ismail Pasha was ejected from Egypt little less than twenty-five years before the date of the Anglo-French Convention. As time is counted, a quarter of a century is a brief period, and Egypt may consider herself fortunate, after so great calamity, in recovering possession of much of her resources in so comparatively brief a span. The Egypt of 1915 will, however, be a very different country from the Egypt of 1879. The land which the Turk forfeited to his creditors has been redeemed by Great Britain; and although a Turkish dynasty remains in Egypt, of Turkish autocracy there has been made an ending. In the Soudan also the clouds have rolled by. Great Britain, conjointly with Egypt, has undertaken a task there which will long tax the energies and capacity of our race. The future of the Soudan is the secret of the Sphinx; in the endeavour so far to unravel it, Turk, Egyptian, and Arab have alike suffered. The key to the riddle may be found in the Nile; and when its waters are loosed and overflow, the land which General Gordon condemned as barren from and for all time may yet take her place among the fruitful ones of the earth.

There remains only to be explained the effect of the Anglo-French agreement on the reserve funds and resources of Egypt. This is clearly shown by Sir Vincent Corbett in his Note on the Budget for 1905, when he points out the effect upon Egyptian resources of the release of the



Economies Reserve Fund and the suppression of its attendant charge on the revenue. When in 1890 and 1893 the interest on the Privileged, Daira, and Domains Loans was reduced an economy of £E.348,000 was effected. This sum, and all subsequent annual economies from the same source, were passed to a special account, on which neither the Caisse nor the Government nor the two combined were entitled to draw. The fund, having accumulated with compound interest to a sum now amounting to over £E.6,000,000, reverts to Government, while the difference on the interest of the above-mentioned debts, which had been annually paid in to the Economies Fund, is in future saved.

The available balance of the General Reserve Fund will also, under the new agreement, revert to Government.

According to the probable results of the year 1904 the share of the Caisse in the surplus will be . . . £E.1,600,000

to which must be added :—

(a) The unpledged balance of the General Reserve Fund . . .	„ 900,000
(b) The Permanent Balance in the hands of the Caisse . . .	„ 1,254,000
making a total of . . .	<u>£E.3,754,000</u>

The Agreement provides that the Caisse should henceforth have :—

(a) A Reserve Fund of . . .	£E.1,800,000
(b) A Permanent Balance of „ . . .	500,000
together . . .	<u>£E.2,300,000</u>
(c) A sum of . . .	„ 750,000
	<u>£E.3,050,000</u>

has been voluntarily added by the Government to the above in order to facilitate the regular service of the Debt.

The difference, namely . . . £E.704,000  
is at the disposal of the Government.



A further small sum of £E.50,000 is held by the Caisse for the payment of certain possible claims against the Government.

Independently of the fact that Egypt will henceforward have the disposal of her own revenues with all the obvious advantages which this implies, the net financial result of the new arrangement may be summed up as being the addition of some £E.6,704,000 to the Reserve Fund in the hands of the Government and a decrease of annual expenditure, equivalent to an increase of revenue, of about £E.265,000. To this will be added a sum of about £3,000,000 from the liquidation of the Daira Estate, of which the date expired on October 15th, 1905.

The revenue for 1904 amounted to £E.13,906,000, in round figures, the largest, so far, ever collected in one year; and, in spite of permanent remissions of  $1\frac{3}{4}$  millions, was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions in excess of the highest figure contemplated by any expert at the London Conference of 1884. The estimates for 1906, after considerable further reduction of taxation about to be noted, amount to £E.13,500,000, a figure which will probably be considerably exceeded. The estimated surplus of the year 1906 is £E.500,000. The chief sources of increase in revenue during the period 1884-1904 have been the Customs, tobacco, with receipts from the railways and the revenue-earning administrations. Reduction of land revenue, with abolition of octroi and other taxes, must be set on the other side.

Two further concessions to the taxpayer marked 1905. Navigation dues on boats plying on the Nile and canals were abolished, at a cost of £E.16,000. Internal navigation, except on the lakes in so far as concerns the fisheries, is now free of all duty from one end of Egypt to the other. The tax on the transfer of property also was reduced from

5 per cent to 2 per cent, with an estimated loss of £E.250,000. It is hoped that increased business and less frequent evasions will more than compensate the diminution of the tax. These remissions bring the total reduction of taxation since 1883 in round figures to £E.1,900,000; and close, for the present, the tale of fiscal relief which British occupation has brought with it to the Egyptian people.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the outstanding capital of the Egyptian Debt on the 31st of December, 1904, was £101,275,340. Of this amount £8,917,280 was held by the Commissioners of the Debt and by the Ministry of Finance; leaving £92,358,060 in the hands of the public.

To the debt of Egypt since 1883 there have been added, and, in the above figures, are included:—

(a) The Guaranteed International Loan of 1885 . . . . .	£E.9,495,911
(b) The 4½ per cent Loan of 1888 (raised principally for commutation of pensions and of a portion of the civil list), subsequently converted into Privileged Stock . . . . .	„ 2,158,304
(c) New issue of Privileged Stock in 1890, for irrigation, commutation of pensions, and expenses of conversion . . . . .	„ 2,162,567
	<hr/> £E.13,806,782 <hr/>

Nothing is more characteristic of the present prominence of Egypt in the commercial and money world than the great increase of late years in industrial and commercial companies within her borders. Several of these are mining or exploration companies, whose origin is largely due to the check upon the South African gold-mining enterprise from 1899 to 1902, during the progress of the late Boer War, and to the field of enterprise opened up by the reconquest of the Soudan.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II for further subsequent remissions.

From the "List of Companies established in Egypt," prepared by the British Chamber of Commerce of Egypt, for June, 1905, it would seem that 155 companies existed at that time in Egypt, four or five of which, however, were at the time in liquidation. Exclusive of twenty-six mining and exploration companies, one-third of these companies date from 1900. Add these twenty-six mining or exploration companies, almost all of which have been started within the last two years, and we have some seventy companies which have been floated since 1900, of which a large number have as yet paid no dividends. The late Sir Elwin Palmer kindly furnished the writer with a list of companies (exclusive of mining and exploration companies), with a capital of not less than £10,000, wholly or partly held in Egypt. This list showed, in the summer of 1905, a total of eighty-nine companies, with a nominal capital in shares and debentures of £42,703,200, of which it was roughly estimated that £11,234,170 was held in Egypt, the value of which at market prices in the summer of 1905 was calculated at £26,344,088. Of this total of eighty-nine, eight were banks; twenty-nine were financial or land investment; thirty-eight were industrial and commercial; eight were for railways and traction; six were for navigation and waterworks. Of the eighty-nine companies, twenty-seven date from 1900 onwards, viz. sixteen of a total of twenty-nine financial or land investment companies; and eleven of a total of thirty-eight industrial and commercial. These were all, with few exceptions, sound and flourishing concerns; but since the list was compiled other more speculative projects have been added to their number. In a speech at the Skinners' Hall, on June 29th, 1905, Lord Cromer warned the public against undue confidence at the present moment in Egyptian enterprises. Capital, he said, was flowing from England and other countries into Egypt,

and it was very welcome, provided it was devoted, as was very frequently the case, to sound commercial and industrial enterprises. No more company-mongering, however, was wanted; no more companies whose capital was unduly watered. The invasion of those whose only idea was excessive promotion money would certainly be resisted; and in this it would be for the public to look after their own interests. When extracts from reports were published, the full text should be consulted. The British name in Egypt stood high, and he was most desirous that it should not be tarnished through undertakings which were destined to be short-lived, and to disappear. While nothing can be sounder than most of the old-established and well-administered financial and industrial undertakings in Egypt, there is little reason to expect permanent success in speculative and ill-founded enterprises, of which the capital is excessive, the administration charges unduly high, and the area of exploitation vague and in great measure conjectural.

The commerce of Egypt has necessarily reflected of recent years the great improvement in the financial situation. In 1883 the total value of imports into Egypt amounted to £E.7,866,042; the value of exports to £E.12,177,065; and no very marked change set in till about 1896. But in the twenty years which have elapsed from 1884 to 1904, the value of imports, has risen to £E.20,559,588 inclusive of tobacco; while in the same period exports have risen to £E.20,811,040. In comparing the export figures, the actual amount exported must be taken into calculation, no less than its value. In 1884, 3,073,570 kantars (1 kantar=99 lb.) of cotton exported were priced at £E.7,706,399; in 1904 an export of 5,912,953 kantars was valued at £E.16,702,722. Prices fell materially in the interval, but during late years



have revived. In 1904, it will be seen that not only was the export of cotton nearly double the quantity when compared with 1884, but prices had been maintained. Sugar, on the other hand, had fallen heavily, both in quantity and value. In 1883, 21,850,642 kilos of exported sugar were valued at £E.394,318; in 1903, 39,222,054 kilos of the same class were equivalent to £E.331,801 only.

Of £E.19,888,825 value of Egyptian imports minus tobacco, in 1904, Great Britain accounts for £E.6,985,479, Turkey coming next with £E.2,432,456. France follows with £E.1,906,962; Austro-Hungary, £E.1,420,908; Italy, £E.1,166,022; Germany, £E.1,019,421. Of £E.20,316,076 value of exports, a value of £E.10,900,282 comes to Great Britain, £E.1,601,664 to France, £E.1,956,287 to Germany, £E.1,339,961 to Russia, and £E.956,788 to Italy. Germany imports far more cigarettes from Egypt than any other country; a value, that is, of £E.247,236 out of a total of £E.494,964. Great Britain comes next, with a value of £E.79,478. Of the £E.6,985,479 above shown as exported from Great Britain to Egypt in 1904, £E.1,017,413 was on account of fuel and coal, £E.3,628,883 for manufactured cotton goods, and £E.1,497,320 for raw and worked-up metals. Great Britain, with a total of £E.10,979,760, purchased from Egypt, in 1904, cotton to the value of £E.8,518,572 and cotton seed valued at £E.1,446,699.

The following figures show comparative periods of advance in Egyptian trade during the last twenty-one years inclusive of tobacco:—

		Imports. £E.		Exports. £E.
1884	. .	8,182,702	...	12,553,313
1897	. .	10,603,672	...	12,321,219
1900	. .	14,112,370	...	16,766,609
1904	. .	20,559,588	...	20,811,040

The movement of specie into Egypt in the last five years has been as follows:—

IMPORT.					
Year.	Gold.		Silver.		Total.
	£E.		£E.		£E.
1900 .	3,986,273	...	128,339	...	4,114,612
1901 .	2,969,142	...	116,536	...	3,085,678
1902 .	4,772,829	...	6,437	...	4,779,266
1903 .	6,276,806	...	154,763	...	6,431,569
1904 .	7,012,949	...	593,915	...	7,606,864

EXPORT.					
Year.	Gold.		Silver.		Total.
	£E.		£E.		£E.
1900 .	2,579,775	...	23,015	...	2,602,790
1901 .	2,421,864	...	10,308	...	2,432,172
1902 .	1,828,412	...	6,045	...	1,834,457
1903 .	1,771,708	...	14,229	...	1,785,933
1904 .	2,724,157	...	6,733	...	2,730,890

Total net import of specie.

1900 .	.	.	£E. 1,511,822
1901 .	.	.	653,506
1902 .	.	.	2,944,809
1903 .	.	.	4,645,636
1904 .	.	.	4,875,974
			<u>£E. 14,631,747</u>

The excess value of Egyptian exports over imports may be regarded as partly representing interest on debt and other foreign payments; but these are largely balanced by remittances to Egypt for the army of occupation, and for the Suez Canal, by the expenditure of tourists, and by the influx of capital on account of private enterprise. The great excess recently of imports, including specie, over exports is obviously abnormal.

In 1904 the mission of Lord Cromer, so far as concerned Egypt, had been accomplished. The country which he had found in 1883 in the grip of military and financial disaster, was now not only freed, but triumphant. In Egypt the tangled skein of the political position had been unravelled by diplomacy; in the Soudan, where the knot was too intricate for other handling, it had been cut by the sword. In either case, the treatment had been effectual; and there remained no open "Egyptian question." But in a country where the relative positions of the several parties concerned are so abnormal, it is impossible to foresee where fresh questions may arise. Conflicting interests are engaged, some of which are more quiescent than acquiescent. The Sultan cannot look with any degree of favour on the continued occupation of a Muhammadan province of Turkey by British troops, and the direction of its internal administration by British officials. It would be strange if in a Viceregal Court, especially in the Court of an Oriental Viceroy, there were not many who make it their business to foment ill-will, and who hope to profit by rupture. Quiet and unconcerned as is the mass of the population of Egypt, there are not wanting elements of discontent among the teachers or students of El Azhár, or symptoms of ambitious impulses in the higher and middle grades of Turkish and Egyptian society. The native Press, which is allowed great latitude, reflects something of this temper; and, from the nature of the circumstances in which Egypt finds herself, it is impossible that there should not be many in influential quarters who are far from friendly to the British Government, its representatives, or its policy. For that policy, taken as a whole, is in some respects revolutionary. It puts into the foreground the greatest good of the greatest number; for the first time in the

history of Egypt, the son of its soil is the main object of his ruler's care. Privilege, rank, possessions, before which hitherto every knee in Egypt has bowed, still indeed exercise great influence, for where can great influence be denied them? But all classes are now equal before the law ; in the eyes of the Administration all are alike ; the public revenues are scrupulously accounted for ; the fellah, *taillable et corvéable au volonté*, in old days, is secure in his new position ; millions have been remitted from taxation to ease his burden ; the lash has finally fallen from his ruler's hands. He has been lifted from the mud of the Nile, and has been set upon his feet, as a man. But centuries of oppression have bowed his back ; and centuries more may pass before he can maintain himself in his present attitude, or dispense with the countenance and support of foreign friends, in holding his own against the jealous forces that surround him.



## CHAPTER XXV

### THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SOUDAN

Addition of the Soudan to the British Agent's charge—Its characteristics—Anglo-Egyptian Convention—Sketch of the Anglo-Egyptian Soudan—Its depopulation—Sir William Garstin's visits and reports—Sir R. Wingate's description of the country and the people—Character of the administration—Courts of Justice—Land Commissioners—Criminal law—Lord Kitchener's memorandum of instructions—Lord Cromer's comments on the efficiency of military officers in civil employ—Progress of education—Prisons—Railways—Revenue and expenditure—Survey—Disarmament—Local outbreaks—General progress—Difficulty of the task before Great Britain.

THE burden of Egypt had not yet been wholly removed, or the task therein accomplished, when there was added the burden of the Soudan. Lord Cromer cannot expect during the term of his own tenure of office to see great, or even considerable, results in that Province, for no one is better aware that, difficult as has been the long task in Egypt, the problem of the Soudan is of far greater perplexity. In Egypt, there are a large and, on the whole, a laborious population, an ancient civilization, abundance of foreign capital, facilities of transit for commerce by river, sea, and land, a temperate climate, a fairly sufficient water-supply, and an extraordinarily productive soil. All the elements of wealth and prosperity are there; and if, for a while, its bright sky was obscured by international discords, or by the oppression of its rulers, there was every reason to be assured, with lapse of time, of the return of serene pros-

perity. But in the Soudan the position is far more complex. In all the points which in Egypt make most for hopefulness the southern province would seem peculiarly deficient. Egypt with its nine millions is over-populated : the Soudan has barely two millions of souls through its enormous area. The Egyptian is laborious : the Soudani, if he is an Arab, scorns labour ; if he is a black man, he cannot be induced, except by hunger or scourge, to undergo any but the lightest toil. The fertility of the soil of Egypt under irrigation has passed into a proverb ; in the Soudan, irrigation is in its infancy, and the greater part of the country has never received a drop of water from any of the great rivers which traverse it. In Egypt, distances are inconsiderable, and means of transit abound ; the distances in the Soudan are immense, and transit is still mainly confined to that most ancient friend of man, the camel. The seaboard is easily accessible to all Egypt ; to the greater part of the Soudan, it is most difficult of access, and to many provinces it is wholly unknown. The climate of Egypt is far from unhealthy to the white man ; the Soudan in parts spells death to him, and almost everywhere for many months in the year is oppressive and enervating. Finally, the Egyptian is a quiet subject, and averse from arms ; the Soudan is full of fierce fighting men, of fearless Arab descent, and of excitable and savage black races, both Muhammadan and heathen, but alike ignorant and impulsive, whose fanaticism may be fanned into flame at any moment, and whose loyalty depends rather on personal regard for individual rulers than on acquiescence in foreign rule, or on acceptance of European guidance.

Given these discordant factors, given the fact that Lord Cromer approached, almost at the eleventh hour of his career, these *Herculis ærumnas, sævosque labores*, and it

is interesting to see how he proposes to handle them. In his Annual Reports he has told us ; and the tale, as he tells it, is simple enough. He proposes to rely, in the Soudan as in Egypt, on light taxation, on equal justice, on improving the means of transit, on the spread of Nile irrigation, and last, but not least, on time. *C'est simple comme bonjour*, and if the undertaking should prove lengthy the foundations contemplated are unquestionably sound. But let us look a little deeper beneath the surface, and examine more closely the characteristics of the people and of the land which are to be dealt with, so as to form some independent opinion on the subject. A flood of light has been thrown upon the Soudan since it was reoccupied. Sir William Garstin, the chief irrigation officer in Egypt, and one of the chief living authorities on irrigation works, has several times visited it since the restoration of Egyptian rule, and has traversed it in various directions. Lord Cromer has gone south to Gondokoro, and in successive Annual Reports has thrown much light on its administrative and industrial aspects. The periodical reports of Sir Reginald Wingate, the present Governor-General, and the officers subordinate to him have been annually summarized by the Agent in Cairo. Finally, the Government of the Soudan, in its Intelligence Department, has published two exhaustive and admirable volumes on the resources and present position of the Soudan, edited by Count Gleichen, which for the time being furnish all available information on the subject.

When after fourteen years of submission to the rule of Muhammad Ahmad, and of his successor Abdullah, the Soudan, in September, 1898, was restored to civilization, it did not revert wholly to Egyptian rule. It had not been rescued from the yoke of the Khalifa to be brought under the

scourge of the Capitulations. If Egyptian rule was simply to be reasserted over the great province happily recovered, there would have followed in its train all the disabilities which hamper administration in the Delta. Mixed Tribunals, Consular Courts, Capitulations, claims for special privileges, claims for exemption from ordinary obligations, all the thousand and one abuses connected with consular power in the East, would cry for admittance over an almost illimitable area, and amongst a very primitive population. The avenues through which international pretensions pour into Egypt would be opened out into all the spaces of Central Africa. The anarchy of the Khalifate would have been renewed in a milder, but scarcely in a less paralysing form. It was not for this impotent conclusion that the British troops and their commander had for two and a half years braced themselves to the effort necessary to regain possession of the Soudan. After all the blood and treasure she had spilt since 1882, Great Britain might reasonably claim the right to arrange conditions with her Egyptian coadjutor when they stood side by side among the ruins of Omdurman. There are other interests, moreover, than those of Egypt in Central Africa. Although the British Government was prepared to reassume to Egypt possession of its former province, it was bound to guarantee the safety of its own equatorial possessions, no less than to guard against the irruption of any hostile force into tracts, which, occasion arising, it might be called upon to hold against all comers. Again, in its position as trustee for the progress of Egypt, Great Britain could not but be anxious to secure the safety of the sources and the course of the Nile. Throughout its length that great river must be in capable control, if the prosperity of the land of Egypt is to be assured. Finally, there must be an end to spiritual pretenders. Impostors who



propose to exploit for their personal benefit the bottomless credulity of the uneducated, uncivilized Muslim must look elsewhere than to the Soudan for a field of operations. Therefore there was drawn up, and notified on 19th January, 1899, as between the British Government and the Government of the Khedive, an "Agreement relative to the future administration of the Soudan." The preamble to the Agreement clearly defines the causes which led to its promulgation, as well as the form which it assumed. It had become necessary to decide upon a system of administration for the reconquered province, and for the making of its laws. These, again, would have to be framed with due allowance for the backward and unsettled condition of large portions of the Soudan, and its varying requirements. Effect would have to be given to the claims which had accrued to Great Britain by right of conquest to share in the settlement, working, and development of administration and legislation. The term Soudan having been defined as comprising all territories south of the 22nd parallel of latitude which either had been temporarily lost and recovered, or had succeeded in holding out against the usurper, and territories which might in future be acquired by the two Governments in concert, the Convention provides for the joint use therein of the British and Egyptian flags. By the third article the supreme military and civil command is vested in a Governor-General, to be appointed by Khedivial decree at British recommendation, and not to be removed save by Khedivial decree issued under British consent. Needful laws, orders and regulations for good government, "and for regulating the holding, disposal, and devolution of property of every kind situate" in the Soudan, may be made, altered, or abrogated by the Governor-General's proclamation. No Egyptian law, decree, or ministerial

arrêté would apply to the Soudan unless applied by the Governor-General's proclamation. All Europeans are to be accorded equal and identical treatment as to trade, residence, or property. Goods entering the Soudan from Egypt will not pay import duty ; goods coming from other territory may be called on to pay. Goods entering the Soudan by the Red Sea ports will pay duties not exceeding the corresponding duties for the time being leviable on goods entering Egypt from abroad. Duty will be levied on goods leaving the Soudan at rates to be fixed by proclamation. The jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals is barred. No Consuls, Vice-Consuls, or Consular Agents can be accredited in respect of, nor allowed to reside in, the Soudan without the previous consent of the British Government. Importation of slaves is prohibited ; and provision is made to restrict the import, sale, and manufacture of firearms, and their munitions, and distilled or spirituous liquors.

More than seven years have elapsed since the Soudan was launched under these new auspices ; though it was not till November of the year 1899 that its late ruler, Abdullah, then a fugitive, was destroyed. Since the reconquest it has been administered under Anglo-Egyptian rule, and the land has had the rest which, after the depopulation and misery of the years intervening between 1883 and 1899, it so urgently needed.

From Wadi Halfa, the extreme northern boundary of the Soudan, to Gondokoro, on the southern boundary, the distance is about 1250 miles, as the crow flies. From the Darfur frontier, on the west, to the Abyssinian frontier, on the east, is a distance of 1080 miles. The province of Kordofan alone covers an area greater than the whole of Portugal, with a population of about half a million. The total area of the Soudan is not less than

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1,006,000 square miles, or about two-thirds of China. Prior to the Dervish rule, the population of this area had been estimated at about eight and a half millions. As a consequence of the prevalence of disease, of war, and of internal disorder, the estimated population, in 1903, in round figures, amounted to only 1,870,000. Lord Cromer, in the close of 1898 or commencement of 1899, visited Metemmeh, on the Nile, the centre of the Jaalin tribe, and the extreme point reached by Lord Wolseley's expedition in 1885. It was formerly one of the trade centres of the Soudan; and the ruins of the town showed that it must have been inhabited by a numerous population. It was said to contain, when visited by Lord Cromer, 160 men and over 1000 women, almost the whole adult male population having been massacred by the Dervishes. The country between the Atbara River and Khartum, which had been inhabited by the Jaalin, had been almost depopulated. This tribe, once the most important in the Soudan, from amongst whom, it may be remembered, Zebehr Pasha had sprung, had turned against the Khalifa in the later years of his rule. In June, 1897, they were attacked by his forces at Metemmeh, and 2000 of them were massacred. In another district, which prior to 1882 had contained upwards of 800 villages, twenty years afterwards not a village was to be found. Enormous tracts of once cultivated land lay barren, or overgrown with thorns and high grass, necessitating heavy labour to clear and bring them again under the plough. At El Obeid, the former capital of Kordofan, there was not found, on reoccupation in 1899, a single soul, and nothing was left of the city but a part of the old Government buildings. All the large towns, and most of the villages, had ceased to exist. Everywhere destruction was wanton and complete. In the Berber province it

was estimated that, of a population of 1,500,000 prior to Dervish rule, 400,000 only remained. Few parts of the Soudan had suffered more heavily than this particular region. In the Ghezireh province, which is the fertile tract lying between the White and Blue Niles, to the south of Khartum, 150,000 only were believed to be the residue of a former population of 550,000. In Sennaar, of 1,100,000, the survivors were computed at 150,000 only. Disease and warfare were believed to have accounted in about equal proportions for the loss of population. There had been heavy casualties at the battle of Omdurman, and in other engagements with the British and Egyptian troops; but the mortality arising from intertribal warfare was heavier. Several tribes, such as the Batahin, who opposed Abdullah's tribesmen, the Baggáras, were almost obliterated. Villages which had produced 500 fighting men had only fifty or sixty adult males left, sometimes even less. The ravages of Timur and of Attila had been reproduced in Central Africa.

Sir William Garstin, at that time Under-Secretary of State for Public Works in Egypt, visited the Soudan after the reconquest, and reported in May, 1899, that he had found commerce practically at a standstill. The great source of wealth under Turkish-Egyptian rule had been the trade in human beings, which was now put an end to. The export of ivory, it was probable, would diminish with lapse of time, from constant destruction of the wild elephant. Gum was likely, for many years to come, to be the most important export from the Soudan; after gum, ivory and senna. Sir William found that Manchester cotton goods were to be met with in the principal bazaars along the Blue Nile, and had even reached Fashoda, now known as Kodok, on the White Nile. Cheap hardware, iron nails, sugar, tobacco, and tea were also in request.



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The climate and soil of the districts to the east of the Blue Nile seemed especially suited for the cultivation and manufacture of tobacco. But since 1884 its growth had been prohibited until the reconquest, smoking being forbidden by the Mahdi's ordinances.

Progress in the Soudan, Sir William Garstin wrote, must necessarily be very slow. The country would require many years to recover from the effects of past government. Given time and good administration, population would revive; given irrigation, large tracts of country adjoining the Blue Nile should eventually develop into a magnificent wheat-producing area, and with adequate railway communication might be able to compete successfully with India in the European and Arabian markets. A considerable trade would, with time, spring up between Egypt and the Soudan. But poverty and depopulation were so great that for a long time to come the administration of the country must prove a drain on the Egyptian Treasury. "An insufficient population must for years be the chief obstacle to prosperity in the Soudan. A generation will probably be required to restore it to even moderate limits, and possibly half a century may elapse before it becomes as dense as it must have been prior to Muhammad Ali's invasion in 1820." But the black race is reproductive; and with the cessation of slave raids and internal warfare, population will probably increase with unexpected rapidity.

The character of the people is indolent. The mixture of Arab and negro blood produces a race which has never devoted itself to cultivation of the soil. The tribes of pure Arab blood in the northern tracts scorn manual labour and agriculture; while in the south the negro, or negroid, except under compulsion, will work no more than is needful to supply him with bare necessities. In old times the

manual labour of the black man was wrung from him, for he was a slave; but with freedom will come habitual indolence.

Maize, the principal food, requires no preparation of the soil, and the area within which it can be planted may be said to be limitless. The rivers teem with fish and water-fowl; the forests and plains with game. The herds of the negro tribes supply them with milk and butter in abundance. The annual rainfall is, in the southern districts, plentiful. In the country to the north of Khartum the conditions of life are harder, and the people can only support themselves by more continuous labour. In this region a return to prosperity and an inclination towards trade may be expected earlier than in the south, where, wholly apart from all other considerations, the climate is for the most part extremely unhealthy.

Cotton, hides, gum, ivory, indiarubber, feathers, woods, grain and cereals, sugar and dates, are the chief products of the country. Gold is hoped for; copper and iron exist in the Bahr-el-Ghazal and in Kordofan. Cultivation of land, such as it is, is the chief occupation; cotton-cloth weaving, boat-building on the Nile (the Mahdi was the son of a Dongola boat-builder), camel-breeding to north and west, cattle-breeding to the south, and iron-smelting in the Bahr-el-Ghazal, exhaust the list of other occupations.

So far, these factors in the problem are not of a nature to lead us to look for early or rapid progress. But other and more hopeful aspects of the matter present themselves through the possibilities of extensive irrigation, with which we shall deal in ensuing pages.

For administrative purposes the Soudan is divided into eight first-class and four second-class provinces, viz. Dongola, Berber, Khartum, Kassala, Sennaar, Kordofan, Bahr-el-Ghazal, and the Upper Nile in the first class; and in the

second, Halfa, Suakin, Ghazira (Blue Nile), and White Nile. In each province is a British officer, with a staff of European inspectors and sub-inspectors, and of assistants (*mamurs*), in charge of districts, who are Egyptians. The province of Darfur is governed by Sheikh Ali Dinar, the grandson of a late Sultan, who maintains friendly relations with the Soudan Government. The Governor-General, Major-General Sir Reginald Wingate, is left very largely to his own discretion, and exercises his authority subject to the general supervision and, from time to time, the suggestions of Lord Cromer, whose aim, as far as possible, is to decentralize, and to leave to the responsible men on the spot the control and details of administration.

Great changes both in the numbers and habitat of the various tribes and races in the Soudan were brought about during the Khalifa's rule. But with the restoration of order it is probable that the scattered remnants of the various tribes will return to their customary homes; and the description in Sir R. Wingate's "Mahdiism and the Egyptian Soudan" may, for purposes of these pages, be followed here.

Sir R. Wingate divides the Soudan by the 13th parallel of latitude, as sufficiently indicative of its climate and other essential features. South of that parallel camels are not usually bred, and the rainfall is sufficient, while to the north of it cattle are not found, and there is scanty rain. To the north of the 13th parallel are vast steppes, with thinly scattered thorn, and infrequent wells. Here are the camel-owning Arabs, the Kababish, Shukriyeh, Ababdeh, Haden-dowa, and others, who are employed in transport, and are naturally peaceful. Still further to the south are the marshes of Kodok; to the south-west is fertile pasture, capable of cultivation, and wooded mountains, with tracts occupied by negro ironworkers, and cattle-owning Arab and

negro tribes. Darfur, with its Sultan, lies apart from, and to the west of, the Anglo-Egyptian Soudan. To the south of the 13th parallel, as opposed to the camel-owning nomad Arabs, and the settled residents in the towns and villages, come the tribes and the innumerable sub-tribes of the Baggára, "the great slave dealers, and the manliest men of the Soudan." Well fed on meat, accustomed to defend their flocks, they are inured to war, and in chronic readiness to plunder. They were the main support of the so-called Khalifa, and among the thousands who fell in the field of Omdurman, these furnished the greater number. To the south of all, come the cattle-owning negroes and negroids, who for thirty years furnished the slave-markets of Khartum. Here are the Dinkas, who cover sixty thousand square miles, or about half the area of Great Britain and Ireland, with immense herds of cattle. Here, too, are forests full of elephants; here Zebehr settled himself, as a centre convenient for his pursuits; and it was from the negroes of these regions that his son Suleiman raised his followers. They live in villages of huts, working in iron; a mild-tempered, peaceable people, yet furnishing the best material of the Egyptian army. Dinkas and Shilouks form for the most part those black Soudan regiments of the Egyptian troops which so distinguished themselves throughout the late campaigns. Another division is between dwellers in towns or villages, and nomads; the former, the settled dwellers, forming a population which may not inaptly be compared with that of a Levantine seaport. They are idle, dissolute, drunken, denationalized, and superstitious to the lowest degree; and are a mixture of almost every Eastern race. Such is (or was) the population of Berber, Khartum, and Sennaar. The worst group numbers some eight or nine hundred villages in the centre of the plains of Kordofan.



The inhabitants of the southern provinces of the Soudan are mostly heathen; the majority of the other native inhabitants, although professing Islam, are little better than their brethren. Ignorance and superstition characterize the Soudan as a whole.

The Ghazireh, which in India would be called the Doab of the White and the Blue Niles, is, in its northern part, the most fertile tract in the Soudan—its area is about 7500 square miles. The tract of country to the east of the Blue Nile, between that river and the borders of Abyssinia and Eritrea, comes next in promise, being watered by the Gash, the Atbara, and other flood rivers, of which the irrigation officers write hopefully.

The administration is mainly in the hands of military officers, but it is not a military administration. In all its more important features the Government is essentially civil. Criminal justice in each province is administered by the Mudir's Court (the Mudir being a British officer), the court consisting of the Mudir or his representative, and of two other magistrates. This court has general competence. There are in each province minor district courts, composed of three magistrates, with limited competence; and there are magistrates with powers similar to, but more limited than, those of Indian magistrates. These magistrates are the members of the provincial administrative staff, and are either picked officers of the army, or civilian inspectors, who, unless they have had a legal training, are required to pass an examination in the codes.

The procedure at the inquiry, and as to arrest, etc., is borrowed from the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure; at the hearing the procedure adopted is that of a British court-martial, as slightly modified in Egyptian practice. Sentences passed by the Mudir's Court are submitted to the Governor-General for confirmation. The sentences of

subordinate courts are either submitted to the Mudir for confirmation or are open to appeal before him. In all cases the Governor-General has a revising power. The substantive criminal law is contained in the Soudan Penal Code, which is based, *mutatis mutandis*, on the Indian Penal Code. The Civil Courts in each province are those of the Mudir and of the subordinate magistrates. The procedure is borrowed in part from that in such Indian provinces as do not possess a High Court, and in part from the Ottoman and African Orders in Council. Every court has power to sit with assessors, who in commercial cases are frequently useful. Appeals from subordinate courts lie to the Mudir; from the Court of the Mudir to the Judicial Commissioner, who is the Legal Secretary to the Governor-General when acting in a judicial capacity. Besides this officer are a Chief Judge and three judges, and an Advocate-General. Before long this Court of the Judicial Commissioner may very possibly be replaced by a Bench of Civil Judges. There are also, at various centres, four civil judges, who are trained lawyers. Where, as at Khartum, there is a civil judge, he has all the powers, civil and criminal, of the Mudir, and ordinarily takes all the civil and more responsible criminal work of this officer. In the outlying provinces a system of circuits is contemplated. There is no code of substantive civil law; but Section 3 of the Civil Justice Ordinance provides for the recognition of customary law, in matters of succession, so far as it is applicable, and is not repugnant to good conscience; and Section 4 provides for the administration of "justice, equity, and good conscience." In commercial matters in the Soudan, in cases in which the law of civilized countries is not in agreement with Egyptian commercial law, the latter is ordinarily recognized. The codes and observance of customary law are prevalent in all parts of the Soudan

except in the Bahr-el-Ghazal province, where a large discretion is left to the local officers. The Mehkemeh Sharaiyeh deal, as in Egypt, with cases between Muhammadans involving personal status.

Land Commissioners have been appointed by two Ordinances of 1899, by whom all disputes as to the ownership of cultivated land have been settled, many thousands of cases having been thus disposed of. The first of these Ordinances dealt with urban property in the towns of Khartum, Berber, and Dongola, in all of which places the hearing of claims has been completed. As to rural property, there had been great changes during the fourteen years of Mahdism. If the title to any plot of land was to be left to be fought out in the law courts, according to ordinary legal rules, the settlement of land questions would have been indefinitely postponed. Moreover, the unravelling of the transactions which had occurred during the years of rebellion, most of the parties to which were dead, was a task obviously beyond the power of ordinary legal procedure. It was sought to meet this difficulty by the appointment of Commissioners. The fundamental principle of the Ordinance appointing them was that five years' continuous possession at the date of claim should confer an absolute title as against all persons. The Ordinance further provides that possession, since the re-establishing of the civil authority, shall, in default of any claimant with a superior title, create a *prima facie* title, which would be resisted by the Government only where land was required for public purposes. Power is reserved to any claimant to prove his title in the ordinary way before the Commission; should he succeed, the party who has an absolute possessory title is maintained, and the claimant is given an equivalent piece of land elsewhere.



It is to be foreseen that should irrigation be introduced on any considerable scale into the Soudan, capital will be attracted, and the land speculator will appear. In such case it is probable that a condition of sale to capitalists would have always to be that within a reasonable time certain improvements should be made with a view to bringing the land under cultivation. In order to discourage land speculation, the Ordinance further renders all cultivable land, whether cultivated or not, liable to taxation. Other methods of thwarting the land-grabber will doubtless suggest themselves, and it may be thought that on those endless tracts there is land enough for all. With so small a population it may be long before the question becomes urgent; but, in view of experience in other parts of Africa, it is desirable that from the first land speculators should know on what conditions they can purchase waste lands.

The administration of Criminal Law in a country so wild, so huge, so sparsely populated, and occupied by people who for the most part are in a very low state of civilization, must necessarily for many years to come be stripped of as many technicalities as possible. Speedy punishment of heinous offences is the essential point, with open and fair inquiry and trial. The Director of Prisons in the Soudan points out that the majority of persons undergoing sentences in the Soudan are not criminals, in the European sense of the word. They have unwittingly committed an offence punishable by the Criminal Code; and 40 per cent of them, if released on parole, would never be heard of again in the Criminal Courts. The reporting of crime, moreover, is by no means general. Amongst the nomad Arabs, especially in the southern parts of Kordofan and Sennaar, crime is comparatively rarely reported. Among the settled Arabs of the northern



provinces the reporting of crime forms one of the principal duties of the village headmen, and is said to be on the whole efficiently performed.

During 1904 sixty-three persons were convicted for offences affecting human life, of which twenty-nine were for murder, and thirty for culpable homicides not amounting to murder. The death sentence was carried out on nineteen persons. Quarrels over lands, wells, and women are the most frequent causes of violent crime. An instance is quoted where a man, who had divorced his wife for some trifling cause, and proposed to marry her again, was annoyed to find that a third party had appeared. Proposing to get this intruder out of the way, he followed him to the woman's house, and was about to kill him, when the ex-wife intervened. "So I slew her, to end the matter, and have peace within me; and now I have peace." We are not told what fate overtook this advocate of peace with honour; but it would be easy enough to match the man's case with a hundred similar instances in India.

It may finally be explained that every Soudan Ordinance, before it becomes law, is submitted to the Egyptian Council of Ministers and examined by them. It is then issued as an Ordinance of the Governor-General, and throughout the territories subject to his authority carries with it the force of law.

When the administration of the Soudan was undertaken by the Anglo-Egyptian authorities, Lord Kitchener, who was at that time Governor-General, issued some instructions which deserve to be summarized, so adequately and clearly do they lay down the principles which should be followed by a foreign, and for the most part, a Christian Power, in dealing with men of alien race or religion, and far removed in the scale of civilization. Lord Kitchener pointed out to his Mudirs (who, it will be remembered, were British

officers), that it is not only to the framing and publishing of laws that we must look for improvement and good government. The task before all was to acquire the confidence of the people, to develop their resources, and to raise them to a higher level. Close touch should to this end be maintained with the better class of natives. The Mudirs should learn personally to know all the chief men of their provinces. "It is to the individual action of British officers, working independently, but with a common purpose, on the individual natives whose confidence we have gained, that we must look for the moral and industrial regeneration of the Soudan." The people were to be taught to speak truth, whether pleasant or otherwise, to the officer addressed. "By listening to outspoken opinions, when respectfully expressed, and checking liars and flatterers, we may hope in time to effect some improvement in this respect in the country." Care was to be taken that religious feelings were in no way interfered with, and that the Muhammadan religion was respected. For the rest, clemency to first offences, stern suppression of insubordination, even-handed justice, were enjoined. Native officials subordinate to the Mudirs were advised that every effort was to be made to induce the people to feel that an era of justice and kindly treatment had begun, accompanied by vigorous repression of crime or revival of practices in force under Dervish rule.

These wise admonitions did not fall on deaf ears, and six years later we trace the effect of them. In his latest report Lord Cromer has borne very emphatic testimony to the ability and energies of the military officers who almost alone are in civil employ in the Soudan. Like their predecessors in days past, in India, they have proved themselves invaluable material.

"The British army and its officers have, of recent times, been subject to a good deal of somewhat sharp criticism.

I am not called upon to discuss, and still less to defend, the British military system considered as a whole. But I wish to say something of the officers, and more especially of the young officers, with whom I am brought in contact, and of whose work, in connexion with the civil affairs of the Soudan, I have had some special opportunities of judging. Nothing has struck me more than their versatility. The readiness with which they adapt themselves to novel ideas and circumstances is remarkable. Ignorance of the vernacular language constitutes, of course, on first appointment, a considerable difficulty. Unless this defect be remedied, the superior officer risks being at the mercy of some subordinate, who may not be altogether trustworthy. But in most cases a knowledge of the language sufficient for all practical purposes is speedily acquired. For the rest, it is generally found that the officer throws himself with whole-hearted zeal into the work which lies before him, whether it be military or civil. He identifies himself with the people over whom he has to rule. I frequently read commonplace remarks about the want of sympathy between the rulers and the ruled in countries such as Egypt and the Soudan. That there is occasionally some truth in these statements, I do not, of course, deny, although they are not infrequently made by people who have had very inadequate opportunities for forming a correct opinion on the subject. On the other hand, I could quote numberless instances of young English officials, both civil and military, who have developed with amazing rapidity into being warm advocates of the rights of Dinkas, Shillouks, or others, among whom their temporary lot may happen to be cast, who strongly resent any proposals which they consider injurious to the interests of their clients." (Readers may remember Hallam Parr and his Egyptian soldiery.) "Moreover, for reasons which are not far to seek, the sympathy of the European often varies in the inverse proportion of the stage of civilization which the Asiatic or the African has attained.

"As for the capacity for civil administration, all I can say



is that some of the most valuable suggestions which have been received about such matters as land settlement, agricultural loans, etc., in the Soudan, have emanated from officers who but a short time before were performing purely military duties. I have recently received a Report on the Soudan prisons, written by a young military officer. It is a practical, common-sense document, which contains the essence to be extracted from a mass of penological literature. Mr. Bonham Carter, who speaks with all the authority of a trained lawyer, and to whose opinions I will presently allude in greater detail, is fully satisfied with the manner in which the military officers administer criminal justice. I could adduce other evidence in support of my general contention. That contention is, that the officers of the British army, and especially the young officers, constitute invaluable agents in the work of civil administration in a country which has to be governed under the conditions now existing in the Soudan.

"I doubt if any country in the world can dispose of agents who are their equals. They certainly cannot find their superiors. All they require, to so supplement any want of knowledge or experience on their part, is technical advice on professional subjects, and a little friendly guidance on matters of principle from some civilian authority. When once they are taken away from the routine of the barrack-yard, given some interesting work to perform, made responsible for the proper performance of that work, and left a good deal to themselves, they speedily develop that power of government which, I trust I may be allowed to say, without incurring a charge of undue national pride, is the prerogative of their Imperial race.

"If less fortunate results are achieved in the army, I cannot but think that it must, in some degree, be the fault of the system, and not of the individual concerned. My personal experience certainly leads me to the conclusion that the material, in so far as the rising generation of officers is concerned, on which the British army reformers have to work, is excellent." (This is no doubt quite true ;



but it must be remembered that officers employed in the Soudan are all picked men.) "It may well be asked why, if such is the case, civil is being gradually substituted for military agency in the Soudan. The reason is that the employment of military officers in civil work is unavoidably accompanied by one great inconvenience. In time of war, or in ordinary times as a necessity of military training, army officers are liable to be suddenly removed; and thus, as happened during the recent South African War, the civil work of the country may be seriously dislocated at a moment when the presence of civil officials possessed of local experience is most of all required. Were it not for this consideration, I do not think it would matter in the least whether the Soudan Civil Service were recruited from the Universities or from the Military Colleges. Both classes of recruits are, as a body, equally good."

The preference might probably rest with military men, whose professional training, military acquirements, and habit of command are especially helpful to them in dealing with half-civilized races.

In a province so backward as the Soudan, the use of administrative terms in current employ elsewhere is a little likely to mislead. Thus, speaking of education, for example, of police, of prisons, of medical departments, or of public works (other than irrigation), the mind is apt to be filled with visions of colleges or schools, of disciplined and well-trained guardians of the public safety, of airy cells and well-ventilated corridors. A picture is conjured up of those highly finished organizations with which each branch of the public service in more civilized countries is identified. But there has been neither time nor money as yet for any aiming at perfection in the Soudan. The chief educational institution is the Gordon College, which is not a college, and cannot be one for many years to come. About 150 boys were at work there in 1904, in the higher primary

class, of whom 91 were Arabs or Soudanis; the rest being Egyptians or Syrians. The three main educational agencies now at work in the College are :—

1. A training college for schoolmasters and judges in the Muhammadan Courts. This college is now attended by 85 pupils, and after another year it is expected that a very excellent supply of teachers of the vernacular may be supplied from the Soudan itself.

2. A higher primary school, now attended by about 150 boys, as above stated.

Both these schools are located in the Gordon College.

3. Industrial workshops, attended at present by about 70 boys.

There are rather more than 900 boys, all told, at present in the higher primary schools, and the Director of Public Instruction hopes before long to be able to turn out 60 Soudanese boys yearly, capable of being employed under the Government. The demand for men with an elementary knowledge of surveying, land measurement, and simple construction will shortly become urgent. A vast irrigation programme, sketched out by Sir William Garstin, has received the general approval of the Egyptian Government; and the local irrigation chiefs are now engaged in studying how the preliminary parts of the programme may best be put into effect. In the village schools (*kuttab*) there is little progress, mainly because there is no money. For the rest, equal laws, justice, the maintenance of order, a sympathetic interest on the part of the ruling class in all that is of public benefit—these are at present not the least valuable part of the education which the native mind is receiving.

So, again, with police. In each province, the Governor has been made wholly responsible for the enlistment, training, discipline, clothing, pay, etc., of the police. The

force is composed mostly of soldiers who have completed their term of military service, but attempts are also being made to raise police forces locally. For present purposes, except in a few towns, the police in the Soudan must be rather a quasi-military than a civil force. Arabs seem to be largely employed for this purpose. Prison accommodation is generally defective; nor are funds forthcoming from which any considerable improvement can be made. At the several provincial headquarters, or divisional centres, brick or mud-brick buildings have been put up for the use of public offices. But difficulties of transport add greatly to cost, when doors, windows, or girders have to be carried for long distances on camels; when even wood for burning lime has to be conveyed.

The great needs of the Soudan are population, irrigation, and capital. The first, with time, will doubtless be supplied; irrigation is reserved for later treatment in these pages; the third, whether in the form of Government supplies or of private enterprise, is as yet but little available. Various development companies have been formed, and under an Ordinance of January 21st, 1900, are exploring the country in search of minerals, coal, etc. The British Cotton Growers' Association have caused Soudan cotton to be bought with ready cash, in the hope of stimulating growers. Experiments have been elsewhere made, and local interest has been stimulated. The Governor-General's conclusion is that the reports on the cotton-growing possibilities of the country are satisfactory; but it remains to be proved whether it can be produced in any quantity under existing limitation as regards irrigation. Trade in gum, rubber, ivory, and ostrich feathers is mainly in native hands, and is not carried out with much method or knowledge. The future of the elephant trembles in the balance. A system of reserved forests, or aptitude for



domestic service (which at present the African elephant is not believed to possess), may save him; otherwise, though probably not for many decades, he will disappear before shovel and axe. Whether or no he can be trained for economic purposes, Sir Reginald Wingate, who has human labour problems of his own to solve, is not disposed to ascertain at present.

Since the reoccupation of the Soudan, the construction of railways has divided with the study of irrigation projects the chief attention of the Government. There is at present railway communication from Wadi Halfa to Khartum. A line from Suakin to Berber was proposed, it will be remembered, by Lord Dufferin; and no sooner had Egypt regained possession of the country concerned than active steps were taken to carry out the proposal. In many respects, and in many parts, the Soudan would seem to be an ideal land for light railways. In the tract, for example, between the White and the Blue Niles, known as the Ghazireh, there seems every reason for believing that they would greatly assist traffic. In Kordofan, between El Obeid, its capital, and Khartum, they would be equally well placed. Excepting for difficulties of water, in tracts north of the 13th parallel where the camel travels, the light railway or light tramway may have a future before it. In more southern tracts, with swamps and heavy rainfall, the difficulties would be great. In this direction, on the other hand, there seem to be greater facilities for water communication. Besides the Suakin-Berber line, there is a project for a line from Khartum to Abu Haraz, and further on to Gedaref, a distance of about 122 miles. Meanwhile the Suakin-Berber railway has arrived at completion; and it is probable that the trade routes of much of the produce of the Soudan will follow this line. The price of coal will thus be materially lessened; and the great



problem of fuel for the Soudan will be simplified. The total length of the line is 332 miles; the steepest gradient is 1 in 100; the sharpest curve is 5°. There is an almost entire absence of regular water-supply along the route. The estimated cost is £1,750,000.

A small line of rails is about to be made from Abu Hamed to Kareima, whence a good navigable water-way is open to Dongola. This has been constructed in lieu of a former military railway from Wadi Halfa to Kerma, near Dongola, which had become unsafe, and has been recently removed.

The Khedivial Mail Steamship Company has undertaken, with some aid from the Government of Egypt, to maintain a fortnightly line of well-found passenger steamers between Suez and Port Soudan, the terminus of the Suakin-Berber line.

The revenue in the Soudan is derived from land, from a tax on date trees, from royalties (20 per cent *ad valorem*) on gum, ostrich feathers, and ivory; in provinces south of Khartum, from a herd-tax; from licences for sale of alcoholic liquors, a house-tax in towns, at one-twelfth of the annual rental value, from ferries, from a tax on boats, and from licences on auctioneers and pedlars. The Post Office, telegraphs, and railways also contribute.

For the purposes of Customs duties, the Soudan is, in the main, considered as forming a part of Egypt. The Government, however, has concluded a Customs Convention with Eritrea (the Italian Soudan), and applies the same principles to the coterminous countries of Uganda, the Congo Free State, the French Congo, and Abyssinia. Goods exported to those countries from the Soudan pay 1 per cent *ad valorem*, and imports from those countries pay from 5 to 8 per cent. Goods in transit pass free of duty through the Soudan.

The civil and military expenditure of the Soudan at present exceeds its revenue; and the difference is made up by the Egyptian Treasury. But so much of this contribution as is assumed to represent the Soudan share of the army expenditure is returned to Egypt. The accounts for 1904 show approximately on the face of them the following results:—

Revenue . . .	£E.576,000
Expenditure . . .	629,000
Deficit . . .	<u>£E.53,000</u>

After certain adjustments needful to show the actual bearing of revenue and expenditure on the financial position, the deficit works out to about £E.74,000. The nominal contribution of the Egyptian Treasury to Soudan expenditure amounted to £E.380,000; but after taking credit for various set-offs, the net charge in 1904 was £E.27,000 only. As soon as the Suakin-Berber line begins to pay, the Soudan Government will be charged interest on its construction.

Though as a matter of account the net charge on the Egyptian Treasury for the Soudan in 1904 was £E.27,000 only, the gross sum of £E.380,000 was debited to Egypt. In view of the very numerous and legitimate demands for expenditure made on the Soudan Government, up to the present the whole of the Egyptian contribution has been annually paid, and the surplus resulting from such contribution has been left to the disposal of the Soudan Government. A reserve fund has been thus created, which at the close of 1904 amounted to about £E.60,000. It is obvious that in its present state there is no limit to the sums which, in one or another form, might be usefully spent; but the needs of Egypt have in the first place to be considered, and with the

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growth of revenue it may be confidently anticipated that the Soudan will become gradually more able to meet not only the more pressing needs of the ordinary expenditure, but interest on sums advanced by the Egyptian Government for capital purposes. The following figures show the annual growth of revenue from the date of reoccupation to the close of the year 1904 :—

Year.	Revenue.	
	Estimated.	Realized.
1898 . .	£E. 8,000	... £E. 35,000
1899 . .	51,000	... 126,000
1900 . .	158,000	... 156,000
1901 . .	187,000	... 242,000
1902 . .	224,000	... 270,000
1903 . .	428,000	... 462,000
1904 . .	469,000	... 576,000

The British Government pays the charges connected with the British battalion in the Soudan, including the cost of building barracks. All other charges are borne by the Soudan, or are defrayed from the contribution received from Egypt. No direct assistance to Soudan revenues is furnished from Whitehall; but indirectly, Great Britain gives value in the form of freedom from the Capitulations; by the guarantee for equitable and enlightened government which the presence of its flag assures; finally, by the encouragement which its joint rule in those regions offers to the inflow of capital, and to industrial enterprise. If since 1898 the Egyptian Government has contributed annually to Soudan expenditure, the sum little short of £800,000 given to Egypt from the British Treasury for the expedition to Dongola must not be overlooked; nor the cost in blood and money of the subsequent operations, which brought the Egyptian flag back in safety to Khartum.

General Gordon had said that "the Soudan was a use-

less possession ; always was, and always will be." To Egypt, in Lord Cromer's opinion, the recovery of the headwaters of the Nile is an acquisition beyond measure and beyond price. Increase to the supply of water for the irrigation of Egypt must be found, not in Egypt, but in the Soudan ; and the certainty acquired upon that point is one of the first fruits of the reconquest. Sir William Garstin's examinations and inquiries conducted in the Nile valley during the last six years place this point beyond reasonable doubt.

Under the control of Colonel Talbot, R.E., much valuable survey work has been accomplished in the Soudan. Sheets have been or are being published, on the scale of  $\frac{1}{250000}$  (or about four miles to the inch), of the more important parts of the country, with certain considerable exceptions, some of which, such as the Bahr-el-Ghazal and the country south of the Sobat, are likely to remain for some time unsurveyed. The frontiers between the Soudan, Eritrea (the Italian Soudan), and Abyssinia have also been delimited and surveyed. Fifty sheets have been published, each covering one degree of latitude and one and a half of longitude. About ninety more sheets are projected. Sheets of the Soudan on the scale of  $\frac{1}{1000000}$  are now also in course of production. For the first time in history, accurate maps exist of a large part of the Soudan. A large number of natives have been instructed in surveying.

The country has to a considerable extent been disarmed, but it is no easy matter to recover arms over such a scattered surface, and in face of such facilities for hiding them. Arms are needed, too, in many parts for protection against beasts of prey. But the more the people are disarmed, the better in the interests of all classes of the community. The example of Muhammad Ahmad has already found followers among the ignorant and superstitious, and



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another claimant to the dignity of Mahdi had declared himself as early as 1901. The Mudir of Khartum, Colonel Stanton, reported that in February of that year one Abdul Kerim gave himself out to be the true Mahdi. He had been known for some time to be eccentric; and, being gifted with a certain amount of legerdemain, he was able to pass off a few tricks as miracles on an ever-ready and easily-gullible crowd. He collected a small following, but removal to Halfa and inability to free himself from a Government jail brought his mission to an early end. This brief apparition of miracle-mongers and this short and simple way of disposing of their pretensions are characteristic of British rule; but in the case of one Muhammad Wad Adam, who resided in the forests of Sennaar, sterner measures had to be adopted. This impostor, like his predecessor in Abdullah's time, asserted himself in 1904 to be the Prophet Jesus; and on being called upon by the local authorities to renounce his pretensions, he hoisted a flag, claimed divine inspiration, and tried to raise a following. But times were unpropitious, and only eleven men could be found to declare themselves his disciples. An attempt to arrest him was made by the police, but he resisted and killed their native officer. He and his party were then shot down, and there was an end to the incident. It is pretty certain that for many years to come claimants to the empty office of Mahdi will from time to time appear; for the success of Muhammad Ahmad must have left many legends behind it, and the ignorant and fanatical Muhammadans of the Soudan seem ready to bow before any impostor who puts his claim high enough to suit their taste for the extravagant. In 1903, for example, a fanatic in Kordofan claimed to be possessed by divine inspiration, and alleging that no Government could hurt him, attempted to raise revolt. He was taken to El Obeid, the capital of

Kordofan, and was executed. The pretensions of men of this class are viewed with as much disfavour by orthodox Muhammadans as by ourselves ; and their instant and, if need be, severe repression is made necessary by the credulity of the community whom they endeavour to excite. It is obvious that with so ignorant and excitable a population, and with an army composed of black soldiers in a very low stage of civilization, outbreaks of disorder are always very possible ; and unless instantly put down, they may spread with extraordinary rapidity and set the whole country in a blaze.

From extracts of the reports of the local officers given in the pages of Lord Cromer's annual reviews, we catch glimpses of the strange life our countrymen lead in those remote regions, and of matters which absorb their attention. In the distant Bahr-el-Ghazal the Dinkas' herds increase, in the absence of raids and violence and in the presence of ready markets. Clothing is in more request, and a pioneer cart-road of 165 miles in length has been opened. In the Upper Nile province the powerful Shilouk tribe, gradually overcoming its distrust of strange faces, which experience had taught it to identify with murder and rapine, is on the highway to loyalty and obedience. Tribal customs are respected. Taxation is of the lightest character ; and the Codes elsewhere in use are not applied among these backward tribes. The officers deputed to the province have been specially selected from their proved ability to deal with such classes. In Kordofan the Mudir's heart is gladdened by the appearance in pleasing numbers of babies, and of children under seven years. Refugees from Sennaar and the Ghazireh are returning, bringing with them their families and their flocks of goats and sheep. Old villages are being rebuilt. In Kassala, the present Mudir, Colonel Wilkinson, who

five years ago left the province, was immensely struck on his return by the progress made in his absence. The benefits of a settled government are felt, and the people are well-to-do and contented. There is no difficulty in the collection of taxes. Given irrigation from the Gash River, which forms part of Sir William Garstin's irrigation scheme, as will be presently explained, and Kassala will bloom like the rose. In Sennaar the people are willing to accept an education cess, if the money is spent locally. The province, as a whole, shows marked prosperity. Berber asks for cattle loans in order to increase its cultivated area. The riverine Arabs employed in the construction of the railway to Suakin have proved themselves capable workers, though a previous experiment had been disappointing. But the *laissez aller* of the people is perplexing. Thus rag-caulking having proved insufficient, a hole in a ferry-boat is sometimes plugged by employing a boy to sit on it. Wood for boat-building may be had free, and the labour of boys at water-wheels is remunerative. But in Africa, as in Asia, *vis inertiae* is an exacting mistress; so Soudan boys prefer sitting in the wash of the cool river, to exposing their heads to the heat of the sun and their bodies to the toil of lifting water. The Ghazireh, when capital is forthcoming, has a great future before it. This and the Kassala province are the most fertile portions of the Soudan. But natural apathy, and many years of brutal rule, have made the people difficult to deal with. When Anglo-Egyptian rule was re-established, should a Government official show himself, the native made haste to disappear. Still, there are signs already of revival; fifty stamped petitions in six months were recently presented to the Mudir's native deputy, which caused him as much pleasure as the Kordofan babies gave to Major O'Connell. If matters remain quiet, before long neither Mudir nor



deputy will have much to complain of. Major Dickinson, the Mudir, in common with most British officials in the Soudan, would create peasant proprietors. But will they not, naturally, by process of squatting and cultivating, create themselves? Purchase, spread over a long term of years, is presumably possible; and no motive to loyalty to the existing government is more potent, no sedative more un-failing, no inducement to industry more to be relied on, than cultivating proprietorship of land. In Dongola young date trees have been planted by thousands; and much land which a few years ago was given up as being beyond the landowner's means of cultivation is now resumed. The number of cattle has greatly increased; the price is less than two-thirds of what it was two years ago. A cadastral survey has been nearly completed in this province. The construction of the line from Abu Hamed to Kareima will greatly increase the prosperity of Dongola. The town of Suakin has written Ichabod over its lintels, for its port stood self-condemned, and a new port in the neighbourhood, to be known as Port Soudan, has been decided on. After many years of inactivity, the prospect of increased trade and a large influx of European population, consequent on railway works and mining concessions, promise renewed life to the Suakin province. With the opening of the railway to Khartum, and the establishment of weekly sea communication to and from Suez, Port Soudan should develop, in course of time, into the Bombay of the Soudan. Wadi Halfa is, in truth, an Egyptian province which was transferred recently to the Soudan, and scarcely falls within our survey; but it is the land entrance, as Suakin is the seaport, of the Soudan. Mining operations in this province are active. Exclusive of tourists, no fewer than 311 Europeans, of various nationalities, passed through Wadi Halfa in 1904, most of them



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apparently with a view to settling in the Soudan. Of this number, 135 were Greeks, 58 Syrians, and 27 Italians; a considerable number being artisans. But among them are some who are suspected of usury, and liquor-shops; and these will have to give a good account of themselves. Finally, Khartum, with a Governor-General, a bi-weekly newspaper, steam trams, Japanese rickshaws, a steam chain ferry, a fine mosque, an English church, a Gordon College, and a Gordon statue, has risen like another Egyptian Phoenix from its ashes, and awaits, with complacency, its future; taking toll meanwhile of annual tourists, 480 of whom appeared last winter, to be followed, doubtless, annually by many more, now that an alternative route is opened.

Great forests exist in Kordofan, on the Blue Nile, and in the Bahr-el-Ghazal, the two former producing gum, ebony, furniture woods, and fibre; the latter indiarubber and gutta percha. The future of these forests, as a whole, depends on fire protection, which will be difficult to enforce. Firewood, moreover, is the only fuel available for the Nile steamers, owing to the prohibitive price of coal.

Imagination fails to picture those illimitable regions, the endless swamps, the weary, waterless distances, the mighty rivers, the interminable deserts, the great silence, the scattered, sparse, and diverse people, the little band of British officers working out their lives in solitude, discomfort, and ill-health, while watching over the painful labours which precede the coming of a new life. It is obvious that any but the least advanced standards of administration would be out of place at present in the Soudan, except in provinces comparatively adjacent to Egypt, or in districts situated on the sea; such, severally, as Wadi Halfa, Dongola, or Suakin. Free and constant inter-

course between officials and people, personal influence, force and moderation of character, activity, courage, and unfailing self-sacrifice, are the best agents in these early days for moulding such backward races. There is little that codes or courts can at present do, except to bring home to the native mind that justice is not matter of caprice, but moves in intelligible ways, and that individual volition must bow to general interests and common self-restraint. Irrigation, increasing means of rail communication, the paddle of the steamboat, the shovel and pickaxe of the road-maker, the humanity of the doctor or the surgeon, the skill of the technical schoolmaster, will do more, possibly, to bring these people from darkness into light than primers, preachers, or Ordinances. Easy taxation will sweeten toil. Opportunities of making money, and confidence in being permitted to retain it, will by degrees dispose to industry. But many years must elapse, and they who in the Soudan are now laying the foundations of civilized rule will have long since passed away, before any superstructure can be added to their work. Never, probably, has Great Britain undertaken such an Herculean task with such unpromising material. In India she has availed herself of a high civilization. On the aborigines of America and Australia she never tried her civilizing hand: her citizens who went to their country had ends of their own to serve, to which native interests were subordinated. Borneo furnishes a precedent; but Borneo is not a Crown dependency. Like the Romans in Gaul or in Britain, in the Soudan we have no business greater than the regeneration of its people. Watch and ward must doubtless be kept over the Nile from lake to sea; but not every province of the Soudan lies within its influence. Our principal aim is to make men of the Soudanis. With little present prospect of reward, we have gone to their land to rescue them

from the grasp of the oppressor. Our country's enterprise among the tribes of the Soudan is, in the secular sense, a purely missionary endeavour; the sceptic might add, a Quixotic adventure. It may be that great expenditure may hereafter bring great results; that the rivers of Central Africa may turn the sands of her deserts into sugar plantations, or cotton-fields, or stretches of endless wheat. Mineral wealth may reward the explorer and the State; increasing traffic may add to the public revenues. But all this, by universal consent, lies in the far future. In the present, except so far as the first tentative inquiries in regard to the best means of disposing of the Nile water are concerned, all effort is centred in turning primitive man from his purposeless way, and in teaching him to learn the alphabet of human progress. Beyond retaining control over the course of the Nile, Great Britain has little political interest in those regions other than such as is enlisted on behalf of the immunity of Egypt from barbarous invasion. There has never, probably, in the history of the world, been such a deliberate experiment in the reclamation of mankind over so large an area; nor perhaps such an incongruous couple engaged in it as the blunt Briton from the Thames and his slim coadjutor from the Nile. Which will prove to have been the better forecast, the pessimism of General Gordon, or the optimism of Lord Cromer, it is not for the present generation to divine. Will Great Britain echo the boast of another Imperial race, and be rewarded hereafter by the love of those *quos domuit, nexuque pio longinque revinxit*? Or will she share the destiny of the mythical benefactors of whom the Latin poet sang? of the disillusioned demi-gods, whose labours, identical in character with her own, brought with them no adequate meed of acknowledgment?

The hope of the Soudan is centred in the promise

of its rivers. In the concluding chapter of this book will be summarized the estimates of the chances of success. The problem before Sir William Garstin and his fellow-workers is of immeasurable importance. To solve it would not only be to add to the world's food-supply, but to quicken incalculably the civilizing influences at work in the Soudan. To fail would be to confirm, and for ever, the sentence of barrenness passed upon that country by the most eminent of its former rulers.



## CONCLUSION

### PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT

Employment of reserve funds—Sinking fund inadmissible—Irrigation schemes—The future of Egypt and the Soudan—Schemes for utilizing the reserve fund—The Middle Egypt basin system—Egyptian and Soudan railways—The Gash River—The Assouan dam—The White Nile—Other projects—Estimated cost at present conjectural—Retrospect—Lord Cromer and Egypt—Islam and progress—Views of W. G. Palgrave and others thereon—Value of the Soudan to British enterprise and character.

**I**N his report for the year 1903 Lord Cromer estimated that, without discounting in any way the surplus of future years, and without trenching on the reserve fund necessary for the security of the bondholders, a capital sum of about eight and a half millions might within a short time be made available for capital expenditure. In 1915 an additional sum of about two millions will be realized from the liquidation of the Domains loan. The year 1915 was as yet far off; but the sum of about nine millions was meanwhile in the hands of the Egyptian Government, and was immediately available. The surplus of each successive year materially adds to the Government balances. The disposal of this reserve has necessarily engaged the attention of the Egyptian authorities, now that they have been given full and free control of their reserve funds. To devote it to reduction of the funded debt when more money must be raised for productive purposes would be bad finance; for unless a real surplus is available, there is no economic use for a sinking fund. The best use to make of these

accumulations is to invest them in remunerative outlay. The conclusion, therefore, so far arrived at would seem to be that, in the first place, a sum of £E.1,600,000 should be provided in order to complete the conversion of the lands of Middle Egypt from basin into perennial irrigation. With the completion of this work, which is now imminent, the whole of the programme comprised in the construction, at its present level, of the Assouan and Assiut dams will have been brought to a conclusion. Next comes the necessity of providing a million a year for the next three years, in order to place the Egyptian railways in thorough order. To the above four millions will be added £E.900,000 for remodelling the Rosetta and Damietta branches of the Nile. These three items will absorb not less than £E.5,500,000 of the capital at present available.

The proposal as to remodelling the Rosetta branch of the Nile is to bring the section of the Rosetta branch to a uniform width by means of spurs; the banks being thrown back, where necessary, so that this channel should be able to carry a much larger discharge without danger to the country than is at present possible. With regard to the Damietta branch, all that would be necessary would be so to arrange that the discharge passing down did not exceed that of a normal flood. The danger to Northern Egypt is considerable when floods of exceptional volume pass the Delta barrage; and if it is long since such a flood has passed, the shorter must be the interval before it recurs. The damage that a breach in the bank would now cause is incalculably greater than would have been the case twenty or even fifteen years ago. Improvement in, and extension of, cultivation, increase of population, and the rise in the value of land make this a certainty. The proposal put forward, therefore, by Sir William Garstin is, that a sum of money,

which is estimated at £E.900,000, be devoted to the improvement of both branches of the river north of the barrage; particularly with the object of so improving the Rosetta branch that it can carry off the surplus water in a dangerous flood without risk to the country.

So far the ground is clear. These are all projects which have been approved. Provision of funds has been already granted for them, and they may be looked upon as launched. The Suakin-Berber railway is completed, and the cost of its construction (which has amounted to about £E.1,750,000) will no longer have to be provided for. Then comes a great project in connexion with the White Nile, of which more presently. The first scheme for irrigation in the Soudan which is likely to be adopted, is that of taking a supply from the River Gash, in the neighbourhood of Kassala. The Gash, like all the rivers to the east of the Egyptian Soudan, is a flood river, and is dry for eight out of twelve months. But it is estimated that about 100,000 acres can be brought under irrigation by husbanding the flood-water, at a cost of about £E.500,000. This land, assessed at 50 piastres (say 10s. 3d.) an acre, would bring a revenue of £E.50,000. The engineers are at work on the details of this scheme, which brings the total capital booked for early employment to £E.6,000,000.

The next projects on the list are also framed for the development of the Soudan, but they are still vague and need much examination, and are, moreover, not for irrigation, but for the improvement of communications. The first is for the construction of a railway up the Blue Nile, as far as Wad Medani, which is the chief town of the Ghazireh (Blue Nile) Province. This line points to Gedaref, Gelabat, and the more fertile parts of the Soudan, and would facilitate the construction of a barrage which is con-

templated on the Blue Nile, and of a reservoir at Rosaires, in the Sennaar Province, to the south-east of Wad Medani. Another line is also needed along the proper right bank of the Nile from the neighbourhood of Dongola to Abu Hamed; a third, on military grounds, and to enable the Kordofan gum to find a market, from El Obeid to the Nile. There is no estimate as yet of the cost of any of these proposed lines, but the outlay would, in any case, be considerable. Behind these, again, is an almost numberless host of schemes, stretching far beyond living vision.

The project of raising the Assouan dam, at a cost of £E.500,000, though at present temporarily suspended for reasons possibly independent of its position in the general programme, has been cited by Lord Cromer as urgently calling for attention. More recently, Sir William Garstin has pointed out that, by raising the Assouan dam, the Government is committing itself to a programme which will eventually entail the expenditure of a very considerable capital. It is the first item in a general programme, having for its object the provision of an increased water-supply, which shall be sufficient for the entire wants of Egypt. To put this programme into execution will entail the construction of an extensive system of supplementary works, in the shape of canals and drains, in order that the benefits to be derived from the extra water may be fully secured. Such work would necessitate very heavy expenditure over a series of years. Thus, in Upper Egypt there are some 750,000 acres of basin land which would be converted into perennial irrigation. Such conversion cannot be carried out at less cost than £E.4 per acre; if any great distributing canals have to be constructed or remodelled, this figure will be largely exceeded. Then, again, to raise the water-level in the river, one,



possibly two, barrages will have to be constructed between Keneh and Siyut. One of these has been recently sanctioned, at an estimated cost of £E.1,000,000. Another million at least would be required to make full use of the increased supply in Lower Egypt, since a considerable amount of canal remodelling and extension, with the construction of new drains, would be necessitated. All these several projects, however, depend in large measure on the solution of a great problem in regard to the White Nile, to which the key must be found before the supply of water can be assured, without which the programme cannot be undertaken.

In his great report of 1904 Sir William Garstin has given the results of five consecutive years' observations on the Bahr-el-Gebel, which is the name of the White Nile as it flows northward before its junction with the Bahr-el-Ghazal, and has recorded the conclusions which he has so far formed regarding the possibility of further utilizing its waters. His report contains also the record of his observations during a visit to the equatorial lakes. Sir William's journey was made solely with the intention of collecting and presenting in a convenient form information regarding the Nile Basin, and of assisting the comprehension of the diverse questions connected with the hydrography of that river. In the course of his journey Sir William Garstin visited the East African Protectorate, and the Great Rift Valley, with the view of studying, so far as might be in the course of a hurried journey, the regions forming the catchment area of the Nile. After the report of March 12th, 1904, was written, Sir William made another rapid visit to Gondokoro, the objects and results of which are embodied in the last appendix to his original report.

Sir William Garstin calculates for the total water requirements of Egypt a storage of five milliards of cubic

metres of water. In order to find the extra water required, the flow of the Upper Nile during the periods of winter, spring, and early summer must be increased. It is, then, to the remodelling of the Bahr-el-Gebel that Sir William Garstin looks for his water-supply. This project he would undertake on a scale sufficiently large to secure, not only for Egypt, but for the entire Nile valley north of Khartum, the benefits which such an increased water-supply would give.

The difficulty with the White Nile is connected with the passage of the river through the sudd region. This is the well-known weed barrier, which of late years and till quite recent days, has almost wholly blocked the flow of the Nile. Since the collapse of Abdullah a passage has been cut and kept open through this barrier by the unceasing labour of a small band of British officers. But the sudd is always floating, forming, separating and reuniting, within the limits of the swamps in which it vegetates. "This melancholy-looking expanse stretches like a reedy ocean in all directions, and covers an area of several thousand square miles, for the most part a horrible marsh, filled by tall reeds and papyrus. . . . The dead flat horizon is rarely broken by any elevation, and the sight of even an occasional bush or stunted tree is welcome as relieving, in some small degree, the prevailing monotony of the hideous landscape. These swamps are interspersed by shallow lagoons—some of considerable size—which are filled by water spilling into them from the river channel. It is to the evaporation on these lagoons, and to the absorption of the water plants, that the great waste of water on the White Nile is chiefly due. So great, indeed, is the regulating effect of these marshes that, at the point where the Bahr-el-Gebel finally issues from the sudd country, it has lost from 50 to 85 per cent

of the volume which it has brought down from the hills, and the quantity which it discharges, on amalgamation with the White Nile, varies but little throughout the year.”<sup>1</sup>

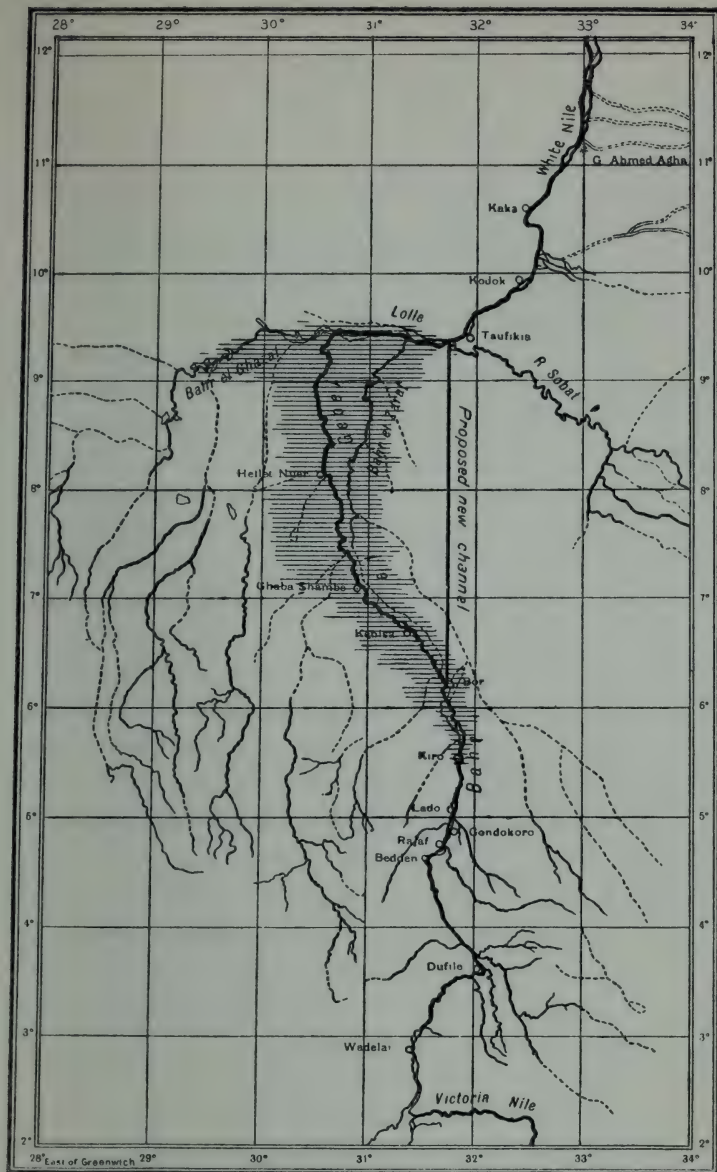
The sudd-forming plants are threefold: *Firstly*, those whose roots descend into the river bed, mostly papyrus, and such-like; *secondly*, plants whose roots are in the water, but do not descend into the mud; such as the Um Sûf (in Arabic, mother of wool, *Panicum pyramidates*), the wild bean, and an *Ipomœa* with purple flowers; *thirdly*, plants which swim upon the surface of the water, and bind the two first classes together. Many of these plants are familiar in the canals of Egypt.

The problem is how to preserve the water now wasting within these marshes, and to pass it on into Egypt. Two ways suggest themselves; but before briefly describing them, a diagram of the country concerned, copied from a map in Sir William Garstin's report of March 12th, 1904, may be given to assist subsequent explanation.

The distance from Bor to the junction of the Sobat is 444 miles, as measured upon the river itself. From Gondokoro to Bor is a length of 109 miles. The river here is bordered by wide swamps, but the sudd region does not commence before Bor. The Bahr-el-Gebel, or “mountain river,” becomes, after junction with the Bahr-el-Ghazal, the Bahr-el-Abiyad, or “white river.” The Bahr-el-Zaraf is a loop from the Bahr-el-Gebel, and rejoins it after the latter river has acquired its final name.

The problem before the irrigation officer is, how best so to improve the river between Bor and the Sobat junction as to reserve the summer supply passing Bor from Gondokoro, and ensure its delivery at the Sobat junction with as little loss as possible.

<sup>1</sup> “Some Problems of the Upper Nile,” by Sir William Garstin, G.C.M.G., “Nineteenth Century and After,” September, 1905, p. 349.



MAP SHOWING PROPOSED NEW CHANNEL FOR BAHR-EL-GEHEL  
The shaded part indicates swamps or sudd country





The course that primarily suggests itself is to widen and deepen either the Bahr-el-Gebel, or the Bahr-el-Zaraf, by means of dredgers, at the same time closing all outlets into the marshes, so as to render the river capable of carrying the required supply. Apart from these alternative projects, a third suggestion has been put forward (by Mr. J. S. Beresford, late Inspector-General of Irrigation in India), which, should it prove feasible, Sir William Garstin regards as a great improvement upon either of the other schemes. It is to cut a channel directly between Bor and the Sobat junction, sufficiently large to take the entire summer discharge of the Upper Nile, but not large enough to take in the flood-water. The marshes, it is thought, provide a natural escape for the flood-water, which should be encouraged to flow over them. It would be thus wasted and evaporated, while the summer water would be confined to a well-defined channel of its own, and conveyed to the north with comparatively little waste. Between Gondokoro and Bor widening and deepening of the White Nile would be required; as well as the closing of all spills by which the river water is wasted in the marshes.

This project of a straight cut from Bor to the junction of the Sobat and White Nile, a distance of 210 miles, should detailed studies not prove it to be impracticable, is regarded at present as the most promising solution of the difficulty. The present long winding channel of the Bahr-el-Gebel through the marshes would be replaced by a straight cut, through dry land, very much shorter than the existing line. This cut would be under complete control, owing to the regulator at its head. There should be comparatively little loss of water throughout its length, as the velocity would be considerable, and the alignment would take it well to the east of the swamp. The earthwork from the excavations would form wide banks on either

side for communication; the drainage to the east of the channel would find its way to a convenient drainage line eastward, and the flood-water would not enter the channel at all. At present the comparative merits of the three schemes cannot be decided on. The chief objection to the Bor-Sobat scheme would seem to be the probable cost, and the length of time required to complete it.

Finally, it is desired, simultaneously with the remodelling of the Bahr-el-Gebel, to regulate the discharge from the Albert Lake by means of a masonry regulator to be constructed somewhere below the Nile outlet. Such a work is the only method of securing permanency of supply in the river, which is fed from the waters of the Albert Nyanza, and the torrents which discharge into it between the lake and Gondokoro. The water which passes Gondokoro from July to September, the three months of flood, is supplied half by the lake and half by the tributary rivers. With a regulator across the river at or near the outlet, the river could be made to depend in flood time on its tributaries alone. The amount of flood-water reaching the marshes would be thus reduced by about one-half. With the closing of the regulator, the lake-level upstream of the work would be rising, and water would thus be stored, to be used when the torrents had run off and were again dry.

These schemes of modifying the bed of the Bahr-el-Gebel, and providing a regulator on the Albert Nyanza, are mostly in the interest of the country north of Khartum and of Egypt. Other projects at present more or less under consideration concern the Eastern and South-Eastern Soudan only. It is to the Blue Nile that the Soudan must look for irrigation, the White Nile being the source of increased water-supply to Egypt. Political difficulties obstruct the formation of a reservoir at Lake

Tsana, in Abyssinia; perennial irrigation upon an extended scale south and south-east of Khartum will, therefore, have to be abandoned, and schemes for the Eastern Soudan must be devoted to the development of winter and flood irrigation. Cereals and food crops—possibly cotton—are the products most suited to these localities, which might be planted during the flood and irrigated throughout the winter. In order to carry out such a scheme of irrigation, one or more barrages or weirs would be needed on the Blue Nile between the point where it issues from the hills and Khartum. They would be accompanied by larger distributing canals on either bank. If a system of basins were also created in connexion with the scheme, the fullest advantage could be taken of the flood as of the winter supply. Such basins, if covering a large area, would reduce the risks of disastrous floods in the northern Nile valley.

Further schemes are spoken of for the utilization of the flood-waters of the Rahad, Dindar, and Atbara. These, like the Blue Nile itself, are all flood rivers, rising in Abyssinia, and watering, for four months in the year, the eastern portion of the Soudan. The Rahad rises in the Abyssinian mountains and flows into the Blue Nile, after a 200-mile course in a north-westerly direction, about forty miles above the town of Wad Medani. The Dindar and the Atbara, rising like the Rahad in Abyssinia, also empty themselves into the Blue Nile. The total cost of Sir William Garstin's projects, apart from schemes for railway extension in the Soudan, and outside the above group of minor flood rivers, and the possibilities of reservoir irrigation therefrom, is put by him, as at present estimated, at £E.21,400,000, or at £E.19,300,000 according to the project decided on in respect of the alternative White Nile schemes. "Both of



these," he writes in the appendix to his report of 1904, "are very large figures indeed. There could, of course, be no question of carrying out such a programme in any very short space of time. In fact, even if the money were available, it is scarcely possible that these works could be executed under a period of from ten to fifteen years in the most favourable circumstances. The time is not ready for many of them either." It is better to admit that at present any calculation on this point must be purely conjectural. The cost must in the first place be ascertained, and to that end the Irrigation Department has despatched several survey parties to the Soudan, who are now engaged in work preliminary to more detailed estimates. A survey of the most dangerous points on the Rosetta and Damietta branches is also in progress; and actual work is already in hand.

It will be seen from the foregoing pages that beyond the fact that the attention of the irrigation officers is intently turned on the extension of projects for the control of a greater water-supply to the Soudan and Egypt, nothing definite can as yet be said. How far any of these schemes may turn out to be mirage, or how far they may hold water, must be determined as the engineers get nearer to their work. There is evidently much that can be done, and the agency employed is in the highest degree capable of executing it. Insufficiency of funds, the use of Egyptian revenues for the purposes of such projects as may be solely devoted to the Soudan, and stress of climate will put obstacles in the way; but none of them is likely to compel abandonment of any but minor parts of the programme. As regards projects for the benefit of the Soudan, the question as to when the population requisite to cultivate large areas of new land will be forthcoming, is a more doubtful factor.

The story of Egypt since 1883 has now been told, in as far as events of such magnitude and complexity can be compressed within the limits of a few hundred pages. Of late years a considerable mass of official literature has grown round the subject. Apart from Lord Cromer's annual reports, which, since 1890, have given a complete epitome of each year's working, there are the elaborate reports presented by Sir William Garstin, and the exhaustive volumes, prepared under the title of "The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan," by Sir Reginald Wingate and his subordinates, and edited by Count Gleichen. The face of Egypt and of its dependency lies open to be read by all; in a few years Khartum will be as familiar as Cairo to the traveller; some day, the grand tour of young men of fortune who aspire to public life will not be complete without a trip from Cairo to the Cape. A period of extraordinary interest awaits our successors in the Soudan; should many of the exploration companies now at work there succeed in finding minerals in any quantity or of much value, the development of the provinces where they may be found will be proportionately accelerated. As irrigation is extended, population and production of cereals, and probably of cotton, will greatly advance.

Looking backward over the past two-and-twenty years, Great Britain, after all her mistakes and mishaps, has much on which she may congratulate herself. She may congratulate herself on having escaped from the blunder of an early withdrawal of her forces from Egypt, which would have led to fresh international complications; and from the still greater blunder of escorting back the Turk to Cairo. She may congratulate herself on having put an end to the dire tyranny of the Dervish rule in the Egyptian Soudan, and on her share in the work of restoring in those regions a reign of justice and of peace.

She may congratulate herself on being established, with the consent of all Europe, in Egypt, where she strides, like a modern Colossus, across the narrow entrance which leads from the Western to the Eastern hemisphere, and keeps watch over the approaches to her Indian Empire. Above all, she may congratulate herself on having installed in Cairo, from the hour of her arrival, the one man who, by natural aptitudes, by experience, and by character, was needed to secure her interests, and to ensure the well-being of the people for whom she had assumed responsibility.

What has been the secret of Lord Cromer's success? That he has shown extraordinary capacity for labour, great financial and economic skill, untiring patience, high moral courage, much insight into native character; that he has gained the general confidence by habitually frank outspokenness and candour; all this, though true, scarcely supplies a sufficient answer to the question. The solution is probably to be found on examining the line of policy which he has adopted. It has been, in the non-controversial sense of the word, a distinctly liberal policy. Its aim has been the greatest good of the greatest number; general content based on general well-being. It has absolutely reversed every tradition of rule hitherto practised in Egypt. It has preferred the many to the few, and powerlessness to privilege. But it has not only reversed the traditions of Egypt; it differs, in important respects, from the precedent of British rule in India. It has recognized the claim of the native of the land for immunity from fiscal importunities in a far more marked degree than we find that claim admitted in India. Moral and material progress have not been lost sight of, but they have been deliberately relegated to a subordinate place. The economic base of the Agent's policy has been the desire to leave an appreciable margin in the hands of the taxpayer, to allow it



(to use Sir Robert Peel's phrase which Lord Cromer employed in India, and has repeated in Egypt) to fructify in the pockets of the people. Much that is left in the pockets of the taxpayer will doubtless never fructify; it will be spent unremuneratively, and on the indulgences of passing pleasures. But something will remain; and the fruit that it bears will have more than pecuniary value. The growth of an economical spirit, of forethought, self-denial, and thrift, are among the products of a liberal fiscal policy, and for qualities such as these there is need enough and to spare in the modern Egyptian.

The basis of Lord Cromer's policy has thus been sympathy with the Egyptian. He has put, as has been said, the claims of the administration in the second rank, when compared with the popular sentiment. He has habitually looked at all questions, not solely from the point of view of the educationalist, or the administrator, but as much as possible from the point of view of the Egyptian himself. It is because he has so carefully studied the standpoint of the native population that, on the one hand, Lord Cromer commands a larger share of confidence among the more thoughtful and enlightened of its residents than is usually accorded to a foreigner, and that, on the other hand, he has exposed himself to the criticism that too much in Egypt is subordinated to mere native prejudice, and too great consideration is shown to the conservative preferences of native ignorance. But Lord Cromer has never forgotten for a moment that he is in Egypt on behalf of the people of Egypt; that every matter of internal administration or finance must be examined from the point of view of their interests; that it is their revenues, their soil, their property, of which he disposes. Even his annual reports are in great measure addressed to an Egyptian audience. "Were I writing solely for the



information of His Majesty's Government, or for that of the British Parliament and public, it would probably be sufficient if I dwelt only on the main features of the Egyptian situation. The adoption of this measure would, however, hardly satisfy the public in Egypt, who naturally expect to receive more detailed information on a number of subjects of local interest. So far as my own part in the preparation of the annual reports is concerned, I may say that my wish has been to render them, so to speak, as educational as possible ; that is to say, I have endeavoured, not merely to record a bald statement of facts, but also to turn the attention of the Egyptians, and more especially of the rising generation among them—who are growing up under conditions wholly different to those which existed during the youth of their parents—to the future which lies before their country, and to a variety of subjects of interest to all of them, as citizens of a State which is now rapidly striding towards an advanced stage of civilization ; whilst these subjects should be of special interest to those among them who are destined, in various capacities, to take a share in Egyptian government and administration. If I can cause even some small proportion of these to reflect on the true causes which have led to the decadence of so many Oriental states, and on the methods best adapted to prevent any recurrence of those causes, my main object will have been attained, and the labours of my coadjutors will not have been in vain.”<sup>1</sup> He goes on to congratulate himself on the fact that of the 500 copies of his last report which were circulated in Egypt, a considerable number were read and discussed in the superior schools and colleges. The editor of one of the leading Arabic papers had for some years past translated the annual reports into the vernacular ; in 1904, 4300

<sup>1</sup> Page 1, Report for 1904, Blue Book, Egypt, 1905.

copies were either issued gratis to their subscribers, or separately sold.

"The causes which have led to the decadence of so many Oriental states"—that is delicate ground for a European to touch upon. Had the phrase run, "so many Muhammadan states," it had been unmannerly. But a scheme of social life which rests for its authority on the unfruitful traditions of doctors of divinity, a system of government which has its roots in the dogmas and doctrines of the theology of a bygone time, a polity of which the soil can never be wholly renewed, but, however much turned over and weeded, must in substance and in quality be always the same, such scheme, system, or polity, though it cannot wholly restrain the development of the public mind, or the advancement of human thought, does not admit of sustained and continuous progress. Compliance with authority in matters of opinion, and with custom in social matters, are the characteristics of a community nurtured on such a system. Every step forward is barred by some ancient ordinance, claiming divine origin, or the supreme authority of tradition; the growing limbs of the community are swathed, like the feet of Chinese women, in inflexible bands, and assume a non-natural and stunted development. No one knew Muhammadan life more profoundly than William Gifford Palgrave, and this is what he wrote on the subject:—<sup>1</sup>

"We cannot refrain from remarking that the Islamistic identification of religion and law is an essential defect in the system, and a serious hindrance to the development of good government and social progress in these countries. True, no creed was ever less superstitious in its articles, less exacting in its practice, and less superstitious in its

<sup>1</sup> "Essays on Eastern Questions," p. 94. London: Macmillan and Co., 1872.

adjuncts, than the Muhammadan. Still, it is a creed ; and as such tends in common with all religious systems yet devised to narrow the mind, cramp the faculties, and, above all, to run precisely counter to the adaptability essential in a law-code made for men and their ever-changing circumstances. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that this blending of the two faculties into one gives to each additional strength, and so far confirms the edifice which it narrows."

And, again :—

"Among the many items in which the Muhammadan system requires, if not mending, at least large adaptation to an altered state of things, we must number the restrictions it imposes on trade. These belong to a whole category of precepts and prohibitions such as have fettered most religions, and the comparative freedom from which was no small merit of Christianity in its original institution. Simple, many would say defective, on its dogmatic side, the Muhammadan code errs sadly by excess in its practical regulations, which extend to almost every detail of life, social and personal. For some the Koran is responsible, for some tradition. Many of these prohibitions were really useful at the time and for the local and national circumstances under which they were promulgated, but the inflexibility of religious sanction has rendered them real evils to a later and altered age. Of this kind are, for example, the laws regulating marriage, inheritance and slavery ; decided improvements, no doubt, on what had existed in Arabia, and even in the greater part of the world, before Muhammad's time ; but, for all that, positively injurious when maintained in the midst of an advanced or advancing order of things. And to this list belong the limitations placed on commerce by the Arab legislator ; and more especially his two great prohibitions—that of interest and that of conditional contract." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.



Thus there are the gross evils of sanctioned concubinage, and of polygamy, with their baleful effect on the home life and character of the family, and on the education of children ; the seclusion of women, with all that it implies—both for those who are immured, and for the sex from whose social intercourse is excluded the most softening and humanizing element available to it. The divine ordinance of slavery must be reckoned with, which degrades the dignity of labour and of industry, no less than the ideal of humanity. There is further the ill-concealed and smouldering antagonism to all that is not Islam ; the claim that the Muhammadan kingdom is of this, no less than of a future, world ; the haughty contempt for every creed and every people that is not within its fold ; the spirit of unrest, and the dormant hope of domination, which brood over the promises of the Prophet. Finally, there is the reluctance of the fatalist to improve upon the position designed for him by his Creator ; and there is the plea of the Oriental for repose.

The problem, then, which is set before the Egyptian, is how to square the facts of the situation in which he finds himself with the mandates of his creed, and the precepts of its interpreters. He is hemmed round by ordinances and usages claiming divine authority which are no longer suitable to his condition ; and he is assailed by inducements to liberate himself, which are not to be reconciled with the traditions of his creed, or with the tenets of its accepted doctors. When the Apostle to the Gentiles declared that the law was their schoolmaster, but that after faith had come they were no longer under the law, he prepared their escape from the dilemma which presses on the disciples of Muhammad. In spite of the efforts made with varying success in later ages to reassert sacerdotal authority and to enslave the public



conscience, it was through the triumph of the spirit over the letter that the West escaped from bondage. There can be no greater impediment to the evolution of a community than to be compelled to maintain in the changing relations of social life religious ordinances and codes, those "weak and beggarly elements," which, suited as they may have been to generations past, have ceased to be appropriate to the needs and circumstances of a later hour. There are no bonds from which escape is so difficult as those imposed by a system of jurisprudence or of law which claims to rest directly upon inspiration, and to embody the divine mandate. Such a system brands innovation with the name of apostasy, and condemns every effort of the social reformer as opposed to the text or to the spirit of revelation. It gives to the narrowest conservatism divine sanction, and lends its authority to archaic and obsolete forms of collective life. "Islam is, in its essence, stationary," says Palgrave elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> ". . . Islam is lifeless; and, because lifeless, cannot grow, cannot advance, cannot change, and was never intended so to do. 'Stand still' is its motto, and its most essential condition." So, too, Stanley Lane Poole in his introduction to Lane's "Selections": "As a social system Islam is a complete failure." As a polity, Islam is sterile. Should it succeed in adapting its tenets and its institutions to the requirements of modern times, its votaries may yet take their place among progressive peoples. But, with rare exceptions, there is no evidence of any such movement; on the contrary, such symptoms of revival as have shown themselves of late years among Muhammadans have been rather in the direction of reaction, the flood seeking to flow back to its fountain. The Sultan of Turkey, it must not be forgotten, is also

<sup>1</sup> "Central and Eastern Arabia," vol. I, p. 272.

the Caliph, the head of the Muslim Church. It may be assumed with tolerable certainty that so long as the Turk retains that position—albeit that neither by descent, nor by any other title, has he any valid claim to it—little encouragement will be given to movements which aim at reconciling the spirit of modern times with the authority and ordinances of the sacred text or of tradition.

Passing from such debatable matter, let us conclude by adding that while many elements have combined to forward the deliverance and revival of Egypt, no permanent effect can be hoped for without the hand of time. Much time indeed will be needed if the labours of the last twenty-three years are to leave behind them permanent results. The very rapidity with which order has replaced misrule, and prosperity has succeeded to insolvency, is misleading. The result has been brought about by the energy and ability of foreigners; it implies no guarantee that were these withdrawn, other conditions would remain unchanged. All question of Islam apart, there is no native power in Egypt which could maintain, far less continue, the work of reform for a twelvemonth if the controlling hand were removed. We must not for a moment suffer ourselves to be misled by the glib assurances of native journalists, or by the *copia fandi* of a few who may affect to represent the younger generation. There is needed far more than a ready pen or a facile tongue to advance such work as has been accomplished in Egypt since 1883. The British have been in India for more than a century and a half. It is, as years go, a considerable period; but what are a hundred and fifty years to the long procession of preceding centuries? If we may judge by the progress which has been made by the people of India during the British tenure of their country, there is no reason to be sanguine that

in Egypt advance will be more rapid. Without a sense of corporate needs, without a common and collective purpose, without civic virtues, without social energy, and with little recognition of their low standard of public morality and courage, there can be no real progress made by her citizens in the work of regenerating Egypt. Where are we to look for these qualifications? What influences favour them? The Palace, the Pashas, the Ulema? An individual here or there who has the root of the matter in him may occur to the mind as it ranges from Alexandria to Assouan; but nowhere is there collective purpose. The very eminence to which such an exceptional individual may attain is the surest proof and unanswerable evidence of the dead level of the community from which he has emerged. The effect of centuries of unremitting misrule is graven deep in the character of the Egyptian; the iron has entered into his inmost soul. Long after tyranny has been destroyed, its vices may still be read in the servile aptitude and unmanly acquiescence of the races whom it crushed; "the evil that men do lives after them." The part which can be most usefully taken by the more enlightened sons of Egypt at present, and for years to come, is to endeavour to assimilate new ideas, to reconcile if possible the conditions which regulate their social life with the new order which has arisen among them, and to graft afresh their national existence on the stock with which foreign hands have supplied them.

It is not only Egypt, however, which may profit by her connexion with Great Britain. Egypt and the Soudan have their uses for our own race, too. Such a work as is being accomplished under our eyes in those lands is no mean corrective to more sordid ideals, to the effect on our national character of commercial or of class greed, of the



hot pursuit of trivial pleasures, or of that keen struggle for privilege and social distinction which are so discreditable to much of our community. The officers who risk health and life in the swamps of the White Nile, or who are sacrificing their best years to the welfare of fellow-men of humble races in remote and desert solitudes, are illustrating, and, in their several degrees, are adding strength to the qualities which are the best inheritance of our nation. Enterprise such as theirs cannot but excite emulation and brace the national fibre. What the salt seas were to our forefathers in the spacious days of good Queen Bess, the untrodden spaces of new lands are to their descendants. It has been said, or sung, that the East calls us. It is neither East, nor West, nor any one quarter of the world, but the lust of adventure and the love of enterprise that are calling to the men of our race. Every undeveloped people, every unexplored country is calling. Athens and Rome, long centuries ago, heard that call, and followed it. We are treading, not unworthily let us hope, where free and fearless men of old have trod before us. Wherever there are to be found great areas peopled by strange tribes, wherever mighty rivers roll from sources little visited by man, wherever seemingly illimitable forests bar the way to human intercourse, wherever the mystery and the fascination of the unknown or the unfamiliar are felt—all such lands are calling to adventurous spirits among us, for whom there is little room in the crowded field at home, or who prefer to the well-worn paths of the old world the hazards and the freedom of a world which is to them new. A century ago it was—as it still is—India; to-day Nigeria, East Africa, Rhodesia, the Egyptian Soudan are calling. The work which our countrymen are doing there quickens the pulses of their brothers at home; their lives will not wholly



be lost sight of in the national roll-call of citizens who have added to the lustre of their country. Politicians—not a few—will decry them ; men of the world will make light of them ; but the cause of humanity and the hearts of the helpless will gather hope and encouragement from their labours.

## APPENDIX I

(See page 255.)

THE following descriptions of the dam at Assuan and of the Assiout and Zifta barrages are taken from a paper contributed by Colonel Sir Hanbury Brown, K.C.M.G., late R.E., to the Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers, at the International Engineering Congress of 1904, and printed in the Transactions of that Society, volume LIV, part C, 1905.

The Assuan Dam is built on the granite rock which forms the crest of the First Cataract, 600 miles to the south of Cairo. The original design of the dam was the work of Sir William Willcocks; the dam, as actually built, was in principle the same as that originally designed, but was modified in details. It is about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles (2000 m.) in length. Its height varies with the level at which sound rock was found, the maximum height from foundation being about 125 ft. (37 m.). The thickness of the dam at the top is 23 ft. (7 m.) and at the deepest part 81 ft. (25 m.), and the total weight of masonry in it is over one million tons. The difference of water-level above and below the dam is 67 ft. (21 m.). The dam is constructed of local granite set in Portland cement mortar. The interior is of rubble laid by hand, with about 40% of the bulk in cement mortar, 4 of sand to 1 of cement. All the face work is of coursed rock-faced ashlar, except the sluice linings, which are finely dressed. The lining of thirty of the lower sluices is of cast iron. The dam is pierced with sluice openings of sufficient area to pass the flood discharge of the river, which may amount to 500,000 cu. ft. per sec. There are 140 such openings 23 ft. (7 m.) high by 6 ft. 6 in. (2 m.) wide, and forty more of half that height and same width. Those sluice-gates which are subject to heavy pressure at the time of movement are of the Stoney roller pattern. Navigation is provided for by a ladder of four locks, each 263 ft. (80 m.) long by 31 ft. ( $9\frac{1}{2}$  m.) wide. The cost of the dam was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds.

The reservoir above the dam, as built, is calculated to hold about 1300 million cubic yards of water with the water-surface at 106 m. above sea. It had originally been decided to build the dam 26 ft. higher, so as to hold up water to 114 m. above sea, which would have given a storage capacity in the reservoir of 3250 million cu. yd. But the Egyptian Government gave way before the strong protests against the submersion of Philæ raised by archæologists and artists, and the lesser project was adopted; a compromise which is far from satisfying the champions either of the past or of the present.

Both the Assiout and Zifta barrages are built on platforms, 9 ft. 9 in. (3 m.) thick and from 85 to 100 ft. (26 to 30 m.) wide, enclosed between up- and down-stream rows of cast-iron piles specially designed to permit of the junctions being grouted with cement. In addition, there are apron extensions to the floor, the up-stream apron being of rubble and puddled clay, the down-stream apron of rubble overlying a filter bed of pebbles and fine stuff. The Assiout Barrage is 900 yd. in length and has 111 bays of 16 ft. 5 in. (5 m.) width, separated by piers 6 ft. 6 in. (2 m.) wide, with abutment piers of 13 ft. (4 m.) thickness after every ninth opening, and a lock of 52 ft. 6 in. (16 m.) width and 263 ft. (80 m.) length. Two iron regulating gates, as in the old barrage, are worked in vertical grooves by an overhead winch, and provide for holding up a level of 9 ft. 9 in. (3 m.) of water. The Zifta Barrage has 50 bays, but is in other respects similar to the Assiout Barrage, except that it is designed to hold up 13 ft. of water.

## APPENDIX II

### THE EGYPTIAN BUDGET FOR 1906

(Page 349.)

THE Budget for the year 1906 shows an approximate revenue, in the year 1905, of £E.14,500,000, against an estimate of £E.12,255,000. The estimate for 1906 is taken at £E.13,500,000, after allowing for fresh reduction of taxation, to the amount of £E.332,000; expenditure, ordinary and special, is estimated at £E.13,000,000, leaving a surplus of £E.500,000. Exclusive of special credits, and of credits chargeable to the Reserve Fund, the estimated expenditure of 1906 amounts to £E.12,317,000, against £E.11,308,000 in 1905. Of this excess, the sum of £E.370,000 is due to the extraordinary recent rise in prices in Egypt, necessitating an increase to many salaries, with enhanced cost of maintenance of prisoners, hospital patients, forage, and the like. Inclusive of special credits for expenditure on works of public utility, chargeable to the Reserve Fund, the expenditure amounts, as above shown, to £E.13,000,000.

The reductions in taxation, referred to above, which bring the total of taxes reduced since 1883 to a figure considerably over two million pounds Egyptian, have been under the following heads:—

Salt monopoly abolished, after arrangement with the "Salt and Soda" Company, who are the present lessees, by which, among other points, the price of salt has been lowered from £E.5 to £E.2 per ton (see p. 288), estimated loss of revenue . . .		£E. 175,000
Tax on sea fishing boats . . . . .		2,000
Ferry tax on canals abolished } . . . . .		7,000
„ „ Nile „ } . . . . .		
Red Sea lighthouse dues reduced . . . . .		30,000
Import duty reduced from 8%, being the general tariff of the Turkish Exterior, to 4% on coal, liquid fuel, charcoal, firewood, timber for building purposes, petroleum; oxen, cows, sheep, and goats, whether alive or cold stored . . . . .		118,000



Since the Budget was framed, penny postage has been established between Great Britain and Egypt at an estimated loss to the Egyptian Treasury of £E.4,200.

The Department of Public Instruction receives a grant of £E.276,300 in 1906, as against £E.234,800 in 1905; of this increase, £E.20,000 is borne by the Treasury, the remainder being provided by increased receipts. The Jail estimates have been raised from £E.93,080 in 1905 to £E.117,032 in 1906; mainly on account of the increased cost of provisions. Railway expenditure is estimated at £E.1,803,061 in 1906, as against £E.1,416,000 in 1905. The Sanitary and Judicial Departments also receive increased grants.

The Reserve Fund at the commencement of 1906 stood at £E.13,381,000.

The extraordinary expenditure chargeable to the Reserve Fund in 1906 is as follows:—

*Balance of expenditure authorized in 1904 and 1905  
and unexpended.*

Public Works . . . .	£E.300,000	
Railways . . . . .	„ 600,000	
Port of Alexandria . . . .	„ 500,000	
Nile-Red Sea Railway . . . .	„ 400,000	
Abou-Hamed Kareima Railway . . . .	„ 200,000	
Port Sudan . . . . .	„ 80,000	
Other expenditure . . . . .	„ 520,000	£E.2,600,000

*New expenditure authorized for 1906.*

Public Works:—

Remodelling canals and drains in Upper Egypt . . . .	£E.590,000	
Remodelling canals and drains in Lower Egypt . . . .	„ 140,000	
Esneh Barrage . . . . .	„ 250,000	
Nile bridges . . . . .	„ 200,000	
Other works . . . . .	„ 410,000	
	£E.1,590,000	
Railways . . . . .	„ 700,000	
Port Sudan . . . . .	„ 210,000	£E.2,500,000
		<u>£E.5,100,000</u>

In addition to this sum, further expenditure is contemplated in the near future, and is already earmarked against the Reserve Fund. The programme of irrigation work in hand will absorb at least two millions, and the extension and reorganization of the State Railway system one and a half millions, over and above the amounts allowed for the coming year.

Of the new credits granted from the Reserve Fund, by far the largest item is for irrigation purposes. The Egyptian Railways figure for £E.700,000 and Port Sudan for £E.210,000. The work at the latter place will be pushed forward with all available despatch.

During the year the Nile-Red Sea Railway has been completed and opened to traffic in January: the unexpended balance of the credits granted in 1904-5 under this head represents accounts not yet regularized.

£E.250,000 has been granted this year out of an estimated total of £E.1,000,000 for the construction of a further barrage on the Nile at Esneh, in Upper Egypt. The work has been entrusted to Messrs. Aird, the experienced builders of the Assouan dam.



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